

TODAY

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MAGAZINE PAGE 50

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PAGE 22

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MONDAY

THE TIMES FOR ONLY 10p EVERY SUMMER MONDAY

Go-ahead for £15m royal divorce

Princess loses HRH style 'but stays in royal family'

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Prince and Princess of Wales have agreed terms for a divorce and have begun the legal process of ending their 15-year marriage. The prince is expected to be granted a decree nisi on Monday, with the marriage finally dissolved on August 28.

The couple's names appear with 30 others in a list of petitions for uncontested divorce to be heard in the Divorce Registry of the High Court Family Division at Somerset House in London on Monday morning. The hearing is likely to be a formality, taking a matter of minutes, and neither party is expected to appear. The Prince, 47, has petitioned on the grounds of more than two years' separation.

As part of the settlement believed to be worth between £15 million and £17 million, the Princess, 35, will lose the style of Her Royal Highness and will be known as Diana, Princess of Wales. As she is in the unique position of being mother of the future king, a clean break has proved impractical, and in a carefully-worded explanatory statement yesterday, Buckingham Palace said she would continue to be regarded by the Queen and her former husband as a member of the Royal Family.

News of the settlement came at 3.30 pm in a joint statement issued by Farrer and Co, solicitors for the Prince, and Mishcon de Reya, acting for the Princess. The statement said: "Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales have concluded settlement terms for their divorce. The negotiations, which were amicable, were greatly assisted by both the fairness of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales's proposals and by Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales's ready acceptance of them."

"Their Royal Highnesses will continue to share equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children. While the financial terms of the settlement remain confidential to the parties, they recognise that the nature of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales's future role is of legitimate public interest, and an agreed statement on that role is being released by Buckingham Palace. It is anticipated that the decree nisi will be pronounced on 15 July and the decree absolute on 28 August."



The Prince of Wales in Brixton, south London, yesterday and (below) the court notice of Monday's divorce hearing

COURT 1
Before THE SENIOR DISTRICT JUDGE
Monday, 15th July, 1996
At half past 10
County Court Matrimonial Causes for Pronouncement of Decree under the Special Procedure (Rule 2.35)

Sklar D L v D F (567/96)
Stevens E v E (1995/96)
Tandon M v Wallia I (2045/96)
Teague S v R (2265/96)
Tsikalas E K v M G (8446/96)
HRH The Prince of Wales v HRH The Princess of Wales (5029/96)

Both parties have agreed to a confidentiality clause which will prevent them giving interviews on their life together, or details of the settlement. The Times understands that widely quoted estimates of a package totalling between £15 million and £17 million, with an additional £400,000 a year for the Princess to run an office, are close to the mark. Speculation of her original demand being £40 million is also said to be accurate.

Legal sources said last night that the Princess had in effect been made an offer she could not refuse: generous, meticulously researched and fault-

lessly argued, the case strengthened by the recent court ruling in which Katina Dart, a millionaire's former wife, was awarded only £9 million and banned from claiming half her husband's fortune estimated at £900 million. Lawyers believe that, had the princess refused and taken the case to court, she would probably have been awarded a great deal less.

Buckingham Palace, in its statement, confirmed that the Queen and the Prince of Wales would continue to regard the princess, mother of Prince William, as a member of the Royal Family.

The Princess will continue to live at Kensington Palace to provide a secure home for her children, but she will move her office out of St James's Palace and into Kensington - to avoid embarrassing contact with her ex-husband, whose offices are virtually next door.

The Princess will be invited to state and national public occasions by the Queen or the Government, but in common with other members of the Royal Family she will be unable to travel abroad for any purpose other than private holidays without the Queen's permission. The condition will prevent the Princess setting up any kind of rival show as a goodwill ambassador.

Other concessions to the Princess bolster her position as a continuing *de facto* member of the Royal Family. With the Queen's permission, she will be able to use aircraft of No 32 Royal Squadron, and apartments at St James's Palace for entertaining.

The Princess looked composed and showed no emotion as she emerged from a West End hotel with a woman friend yesterday afternoon. The Prince spent part of the day in high spirits, conducting President Mandela through immense crowds in Brixton.

Divorce details, pages 4 and 5
Sarah Bradford, page 22



The Princess in St James's yesterday soon after the announcement that she had agreed to a divorce settlement

Judge is old hand at royal marriage break-ups

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE divorce hearing on Monday will be before a judge who has a long pedigree in dealing with marriage break-up in the House of Windsor.

Senior District Judge Gerald Angel is the same judge who presided over the divorces of the Duke and Duchess of York, Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips and Camilla Parker Bowles and her husband Andrew. The case, listed simply as

HRH the Prince of Wales v HRH the Princess of Wales, is the last in a list of 31 applying for a decree nisi. It will be dealt with by Judge Angel, aged 58, in Court One of the High Court Family Division at Somerset House on the Strand.

A court clerk will read out the list of names and the hearing will take only a few minutes. Once the decree nisi is granted the decree absolute follows in six weeks. The delay is to make sure that the couple do not have a last-minute change of heart.

Judge Angel has been a senior district judge in the Family Division of the High Court since 1991. Educated in Kenya, he is married with three sons and a daughter. Among those also on the Monday list is Jan Heckscher, from north London, who will be divorcing her husband Martin after 24 years of marriage. She said yesterday: "It's their own business and nobody else's. My divorce is a private matter and theirs should be respected in the same way. They are not public property."

Times June sales set a new record

Sales of *The Times* have doubled in the past three years and hit a new record in June, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

At an average of 724,839 a day, sales were up by 48,417 compared with May, the highest increase achieved by any national newspaper.

Year-on-year sales of *The Times* were up by 42,420 against a fall of 18,121 for *The Daily Telegraph*.

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The Times on the Internet
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>



Major insists Ulster talks will go on

By NICHOLAS WATT AND AUDREY MAGER

GERRY ADAMS said last night that the peace process in Northern Ireland was "in absolute ruins", but John Major dismissed this as "absurd".

In a statement, the Prime Minister said: "This has been a very difficult week for Northern Ireland... We must all now work to resolve this issue of parades for the future to prevent repetition of the terrible scenes we have witnessed. But it is absurd to suggest that the peace process is in ruins unless there are those who wish to ruin it..."

"The talks will continue with those who are qualified to attend them. Sinn Féin have excluded themselves until there is clear and compelling

evidence of a ceasefire that will last and is not just a temporary stratagem."

Mr Major and Mr Adams were speaking as a 19-year-old man lay in intensive care in Londonderry's Altnagelvin Hospital after the recent rioting in the city. Nationalist protesters hurled 900 petrol bombs at police lines, and RUC officers in riot gear responded by firing hundreds of plastic bullets.

Nationalists took to the streets again last night after the RUC allowed an Orange parade to pass along the nationalist Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast. In a huge security operation, armed police and soldiers cordoned

off the road to allow the loyalists to march to join tens of thousands of Orangemen in the city centre for the main July 12 Orange parade.

A senior security source said the RUC had to allow the march to pass because the force risked "another Drumcree" if it bowed to the nationalist objections. The RUC's decision to allow Orangemen to march along the nationalist Garvaghy Road into Portadown on Thursday, after a five-day stand-off at Drumcree, was condemned yesterday by nationalists.

John Hume, the SDLP leader, said he would be reviewing his party's role in the talks process, and senior Irish

sources said that John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, had a "difficult and frank" telephone exchange with Mr Major on Thursday night.

Sir Hugh Annesley, the RUC Chief Constable, last night defended his decision to allow the Drumcree march to proceed. "We were faced with the very real possibility of a breach in the police lines which could have led to the loss of life or lives," he said.

The RUC said that, between Sunday and yesterday morning, 2,250 baton rounds were fired, 200 people arrested and 900 officers assaulted.

Republican fury, page 10
Letters, page 23

Court rejects plea to end ban on beef

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

BRITAIN'S last-ditch effort to have the global ban on beef exports lifted failed yesterday after the European Court of Justice threw out the British plea for an immediate suspension.

A defiant Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General, said the fight would go on and argued that the ban, imposed by the European Union last March, was unlawful.

John Major, who was said to be surprised and disappointed, said last night that he would continue to do what he could to restore confidence in British beef. Page 14

Mandela meets the people in moving farewell

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

PRESIDENT MANDELA today begins a state visit to France, leaving Britain after a triumphant five days in which he captured the hearts of the nation, the hopes of Britain and the promise of substantial new investment in South Africa.

Mr Mandela will fly to Paris, where he will be welcomed with full honours

at Rambouillet Palace by President Chirac. Tomorrow he will join the French leader on the reviewing stand as guest of honour during the military parade to celebrate Bastille Day. During four days of talks he will also meet French political and business leaders and receive an honorary doctorate from the Sorbonne.

Mr Mandela's final day in Britain brought to a climax one of the most colourful, unusual and successful state

visits for years. In Brixton he was mobbed by a huge crowd of enthusiastic well-wishers, pushing forward to touch and greet him. Many had waited hours to see him and the Prince of Wales, who accompanied him. "I would like to put each and everyone of you in my pocket and return with you to South Africa," he told them.

Later he made an historic appearance on the balcony of South Africa House, overlooking Trafalgar Square,

where tens of thousands gathered. To the peal of bells from St Martin-in-the-Fields, he thanked them for their support during his 27 years imprisonment. "I am leaving this country full of hope," he said, his voice full of emotion at the scene where so many had gathered in earlier years to protest against apartheid.

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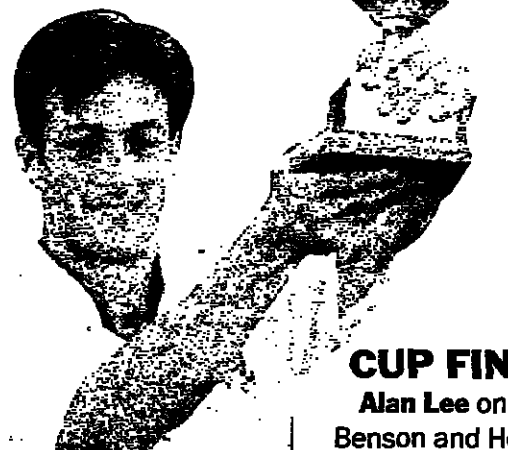
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SPORT

PLUS WESTMINSTER LIVES
Part one of our series on
the House and homelife



Anti-monopoly move as disruption increases

Lang acts on post strikes

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Government moved yesterday to suspend the Post Office's monopoly on carrying letters priced at under £1 after the main postal union announced more strikes.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, gave the formal notice required under law to the Post Office for the suspension of the monopoly and starting the consultation process. He made clear he would call off the process if the union called off the strikes.

The Communication Workers' Union has already held two 24-hour strikes.

Further strikes are planned for Thursday and Friday next week, July 26-27, July 31-August 2 and August 6-7.

Post Office managers accept that as they cannot offer a mail delivery service during the strikes, they can offer little argument to the Government's plan to offer work to private-sector carriers during the stoppages.

But they are concerned about the possibility of any temporary suspension becoming permanent. A statement said yesterday: "The matter is of great significance to the Post Office and we will be treating it very seriously."

Ministers want the preliminary move to suspend the monopoly to put pressure

on the union, but some Conservatives are keen to redress what they see as the damage done to the Government when it failed to privatise the Post Office two years ago because of opposition from some of its own backbenchers.

Alan Johnson, general secretary of the Communication Workers' Union, said that the move would not end the dispute. Describing it as a "short-term piece of petty intimidation", he said: "The Government think it will give them a political advantage if they exacerbate this dispute, whilst at the same time allowing their friends in the private courier companies the opportunity to cream off profitable traffic."

Blair to turn down salary increase of more than £30,000

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR has decided to forgo a pay increase of more than £30,000 by refusing the 26 per cent rise voted for by MPs last Wednesday.

The Labour leader announced yesterday that he would take only a 3 per cent increase, which will take his salary from £64,167 to £66,091. Mr Blair made clear that other frontbenchers should not be bound by his lead. Mr Blair would have been entitled to £83,332 immediately and, from the start of the next Parliament, £98,000, if he remains Leader of the Opposition.

He also hinted that, should he be elected to Downing Street, he would not accept the £143,000 salary that goes with the Prime Minister's job.

Tessa Jowell, Labour's spokeswoman on women's issues, will tomorrow unveil the party's plans for a women's ministry to a conference in Blackpool. Under the proposals, a Cabinet minister would be responsible for women together with other duties, but party sources have played down a Cabinet post dedicated to women's issues.

Leading article, page 23

Asked yesterday whether he would take his full salary in opposition, and in government if elected, he said: "I am in a quite different position from my colleagues. I am paid far more than they are."

"I voted for 3 per cent — that is what I shall take. I make no criticism of those in a different

position. My circumstances are different." Last week, ten Shadow Cabinet members supported the big pay rise.

Mr Blair's decision put John Major and Paddy Ashdown — who voted for 3 per cent — on the spot.

Downing Street said that Mr Major's decision was "a private matter," but Mr Ashdown, Liberal Democrat leader, is to take the full 26 per cent rise which will boost his salary from £34,085 to £43,000, the same as backbenchers.

Mr Major is entitled to an immediate rise from his current salary of £84,217 to £101,557 if he accepts his full increase. The pay review body report also recommended that after the general election, the Prime Minister's salary would rise to £143,000. Labour last night urged the Prime Minister to disclose whether he would take the full rise.

Sources pointed out that Mr Blair would find it easier to negotiate with unions over a minimum wage if he had not accepted a 26 per cent pay rise. Margaret Thatcher only drew the salary of a Cabinet minister when she was at No. 10, but her husband was a wealthy businessman. Mr Blair's wife is a high-earning QC.

Launching Labour's youth manifesto yesterday, Mr Blair urged young people to go to the polls at the next general election, even if it was to support the Tories, rather than not to vote at all. He expressed concern that at the last election 2.5 million first-time voters had stayed away.



Stead: climbed to
surface unaided

Potholer escapes from cave

A BRITISH potholer was brought to the surface yesterday six days after being trapped by icy water in caves more than 2,500ft beneath the French Alps (Michael Horsnell writes).

Three Hungarians were also rescued from the Gouffre Berger near Grenoble, where torrential rain caused a flash flood which swamped the six-person expedition. The bodies of Briton Nicola Perrin, 31, who drowned, and the Hungarian Istvan Torda, 25, were not expected to be brought up to the entrance until today.

William Stead, 37, an industrial chemist from Merseyside who, like Mrs Perrin, remained a member of the Oxford University Cave Club after graduating, was taken by helicopter to hospital in Grenoble shortly before 7am.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Farmer wins retrial over sheep dip effects

A farmer who was jailed for 12 years for attempted murder won a retrial at the Court of Appeal yesterday because of new evidence that sheep-dip chemicals might have affected his mental state.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, ordered the retrial after finding that the conviction of Robert Billings, 60, of Rout Farm, Warrington, West Sussex, was unsafe. He said the jury at Lewes Crown Court in December 1994 had not had an opportunity to consider the new evidence.

Lord Bingham, sitting with Mr Justice Owen and Mr Justice Connell, turned down a request for bail and gave the prosecution 28 days in which to prefer new charges.

Barclays lose BBC case

A French court threw out a demand for damages by David and Frederick Barclay, owners of The Ritz and The European, against BBC director-general John Birt after a broadcast on BBC Radio Guernsey last year. The brothers brought the case in a French court because they said the broadcast could have been picked up in Normandy.

No Masari charges

The Crown Prosecution Service is not to bring charges against Muhammad al-Masari, the Saudi dissident, over his call for the "annihilation" of Jews. The CPS said that, under laws on incitement to murder and racial hatred, it did not have jurisdiction over his call, in a magazine, for Muslims in the Middle East to kill Jews living in Israel.

West suicide verdict

Frederick West, who faced trial for mass murder, committed suicide, an inquest jury ruled yesterday. After a two-day hearing in the Victoria Law Courts, Birmingham, the jury returned a formal verdict, by a majority of eight to one, that the Gloucester builder hanged himself while on remand at Winslow Green prison on January 1 last year.

Anorexic pupils helped

A leading independent girls' school has appointed a counsellor to help students with eating disorders. Nine girls in one year group are believed to be suffering from anorexia at South Hampstead High School in north London. The counsellor comes in once a week to discuss personal problems. Talks on dieting and eating are given regularly.

Two jailed in hotel fraud

A property dealer and a solicitor were jailed for five years each by Southwark Crown Court yesterday over a £2.3 million hotel fraud. John Whybrow, 45, and his solicitor, Rodney Hylton-Potts, 50, both from London, were convicted of three charges of conspiring to defraud banks and a further charge of conspiring to defraud.

Injured boy sues father

A boy who lost a leg when he fell into a lawnmower was awarded £250,000 damages after suing his father. Nottingham Crown Court awarded the damages against Clive Harris's insurance company, Christopher, now nine, was three when he rode with his father on a sit-on lawnmower and fell beneath its wheels.

Princely sum for picture



A portrait of Charles II as a baby aged four and a half months, left, was sold for £221,500 at Christie's in London. The work, attributed only to the French school, shows the prince dressed in a white silk dress and bonnet. A private buyer acquired it after fierce bidding took the price far above the £60,000 estimate.

Car thieves give advice

The expert advice of car thieves is being sought by Nissan after the car manufacturer learnt that two of its top models were among the easiest cars to steal. Help from thieves at the Low Newton Remand Centre near the Nissan plant at Washington, Tyne and Wear, will be used by engineers working on anti-theft measures.

Cantona plays left-wing position for £17,500 fee

By ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

SOME of the biggest names in international business spent £500 each to hear Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, speak at the Savoy Hotel's Lancaster Ballroom yesterday and to bid in an auction that raised £200,000 in three hours.

International businesses represented in the audience of 460 included the media group Turner Broadcasting,

Pilkington and the normally Tory-supporting Hanson Group.

The Labour MP Tony Banks outbid them all with a cheque for £17,500 for Eric Cantona's shirt. He said later that he was acting for an animal rights campaigner. Ryan Giggs's team shirt raised £5,000 and Jeremy Irons paid £9,000 for a signed copy of the autobiography of Nelson Mandela.

Let tests decide funding, NUT says

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE National Union of Teachers, which led the campaign against national curriculum tests, proposed yesterday that the results should be used to determine funding for schools.

Doug McAvoy, the general secretary, denied that the union had made a U-turn and said it remained opposed to using the results to compile league tables. He added

that there remained the threat of a boycott if the workload created by testing increased.

Yesterday Mr McAvoy accepted a report commissioned by the union from Coopers and Lybrand which said that money for education should be directed at areas where there was greatest need. Need would be judged by test results, the number of pupils with English as a second language, and the number of families on benefit. Mr McAvoy agreed

that members might be surprised by the move but said the union, which boycotted the introduction of national curriculum testing for two years, had never opposed the use of tests to diagnose children's educational needs. "If as a union we argue for needs-based funding for schools, we have to be able to identify educational needs," he said. Coopers and Lybrand criticised the Government for falling back on historic spending patterns without analysing need.

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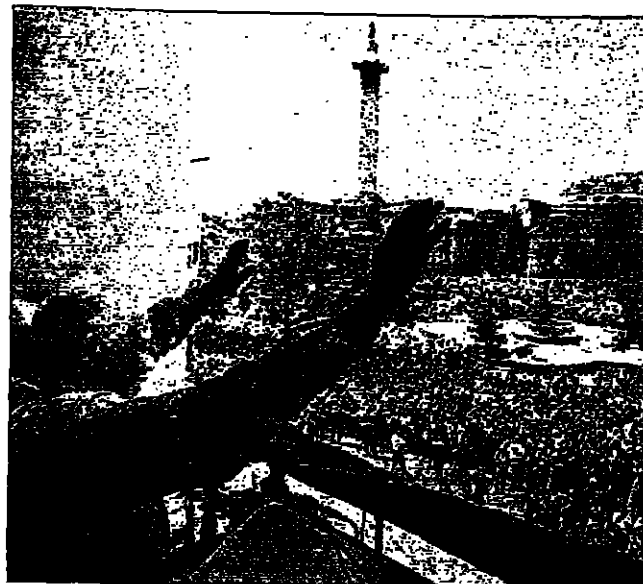
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Mandela bids farewell after triumphant tour



After taking his leave of the Queen at Buckingham Palace, Mr Mandela, escorted by Prince Charles, was engulfed by an enthusiastic crowd in Brixton. Earlier, he had saluted the thousands who gathered outside South Africa House

'I am full of strength. Men and women like you will never fail us'

By ALAN HAMILTON

EXUBERANT scenes greeted President Mandela on the last day of his state visit to Britain yesterday as tens of thousands of people packed the streets of the ethnically diverse district of Brixton, south London. At one stage, pushing and competing for a sight of the President and a chance to shake his hand, the crowd threatened to engulf Mr Mandela and his escort, the Prince of Wales.

No visiting head of state in memory has drawn such crowds and such patent affection.

A walkabout in a narrow Brixton street, overflowing with onlookers and market stalls, had to be curtailed after only a few minutes. The Prince expressed concern to officials that control of the crowd could be lost, saying, "It's a problem if it gets out of hand". Mr Mandela's daughter, Princess Zenani, was unable to reach her car and had to be rescued by security men.

Once in his car and in the wide High Street, Mr Mandela was still unable to move and a posse of mounted police struggled to clear a path through the crowd. Some in the crowd expressed anger at the lack of control, while others voiced disappointment that, having supported Mr Mandela throughout the anti-apartheid campaign, they had been unable to see their hero.

Mr Mandela had been taken by the Prince to Brixton to see projects being run by the Prince's Trust among disadvantaged young people there. He toured the Brixton Recreation Centre and, when he entered a hall filled with 400 schoolchildren, he received a prolonged and roof-raising reception. The cheering and chanting became deafening when Mr

Mandela, in a brief impromptu speech, told his audience that he felt at home in Brixton and that it was a fulfilment of a dream to visit the area.

"Although many of you are comparatively young and may not have taken part in the anti-apartheid struggle, the United Kingdom, especially London and the community of Brixton, were the heartland of our struggle," Mr Mandela said. "I want to congratulate and commend you. I want to assure you that I love each and every one of you."

Referring to a relaxed-looking Prince of Wales sitting beside him, Mr Mandela told his young audience: "I hope that you have the opportunity one of these days to congratulate both the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh for having brought about this young man." The hall chanted back at the top of its voice: "We love you."

Thousands more people filled Trafalgar Square as Mr Mandela arrived at midday with the Duke of York for another walkabout and yet more adulation from a crowd which included many who had demonstrated outside South Africa House in past years for his release from prison.

As Mr Mandela made his appearance on the first-floor balcony to a tremendous roar of approval, the bells of St Martin-in-the-Fields rang in his honour, and hundreds of balloons in the colours of the South African flag were released from the roof to float across London in the hot, still air.

In the last public appearance of his visit, Mr Mandela told the crowds: "I wish I had big pockets because ... I would like to put each and every one of you in my pocket and return with you to South

Africa. You must understand that the people of South Africa are very grateful to you and it is in that spirit that I come here."

He was leaving Britain "full of strength and full of hope because there are many men and women like you who will never fail us. I thank you very much."

Mr Mandela also thanked the London crowd for allowing Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress, to use the capital as a base from which to build the worldwide anti-apartheid movement. The movement had become most powerful in Britain and in London.

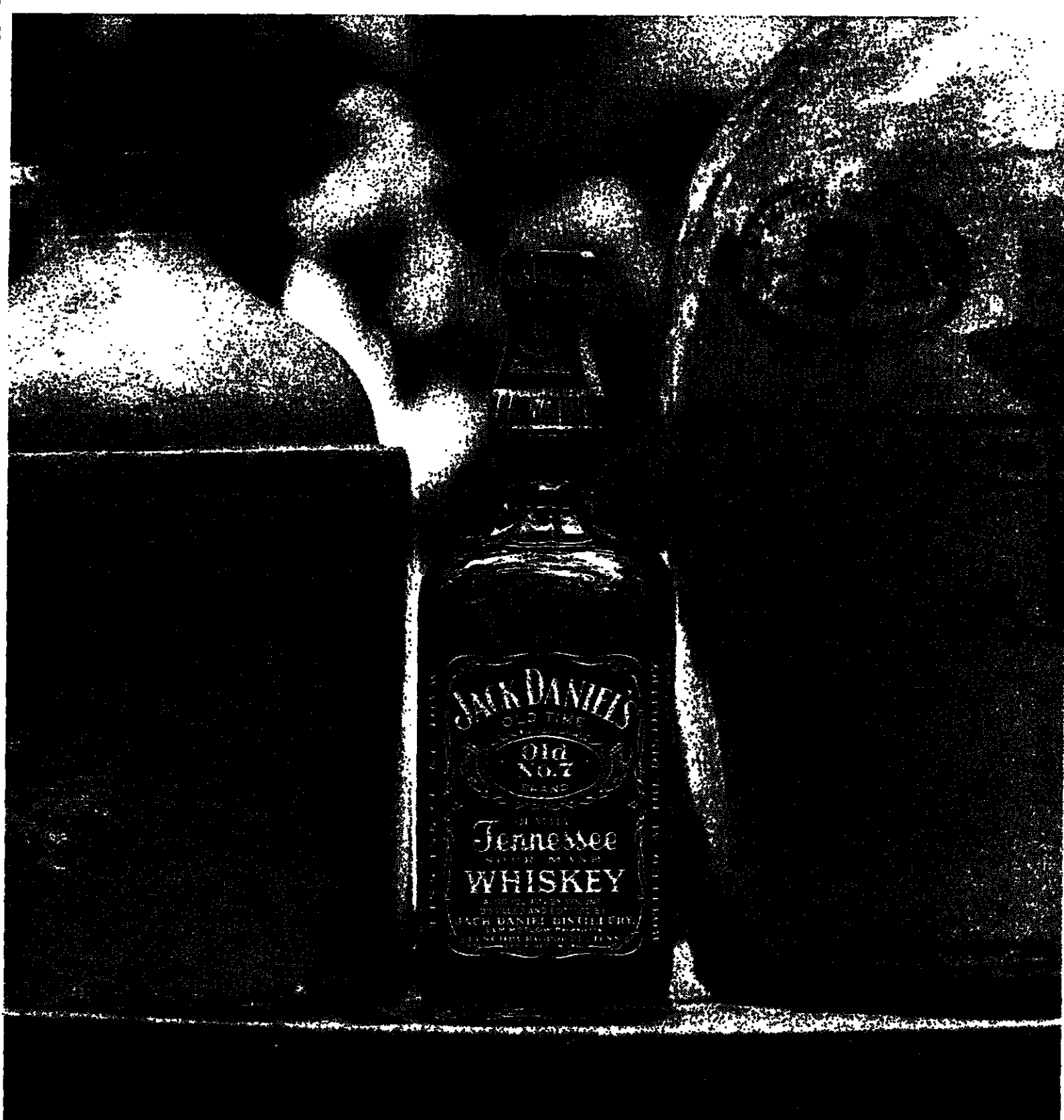
"One of the striking features of modern times is the number of men and women all over the globe, in all continents, who fight oppression of human rights. These men and women have chosen the entire world as a battlefield for their operations, as a theatre for all their efforts. Many communities in the world now have been able to solve their problems because of the efforts of those men and women who have vision, who have courage to stand for the truth and who are prepared to suffer for it."

As Mr Mandela waved his last farewell, the crowd broke into a spontaneous rendition of *You'll Never Walk Alone*. London's most remarkable visitor for many years, so forgiving of his adversaries that he even had a 20-minute meeting with Baroness Thatcher yesterday morning, was gone. Today he returns to Johannesburg to confront the massive social and economic problems his fledgling democracy still faces, despite having an extra £60 million of British aid in his suitcase.

Leading article, page 23
DAVE CALVIN



Children, too young to recall apartheid, reach out to Mandela in Trafalgar Square



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

By the strict laws of etiquette the Princess, a commoner again, should curtsy to her own children

Exclusion from the Royal Family calls courtesy to question

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Princess's loss of the style "Her Royal Highness" means that, strictly speaking, she is no longer a member of the Royal Family, and that those who meet her need no longer bow or curtsy.

But by the strict rules of etiquette she, now a commoner again, should curtsy to her own children, both of whom have the style of Royal Highness. Palace sources indicated last night that, in the modern age, such considerations did not rank high on the agenda, and in any case it would be a personal matter for the Princess to decide.

Even when she attends official functions, where she will enjoy the precedence that she does at present, bowing and curtsying will no longer be necessary, although many people will continue to do her the courtesy. Again, the palace considers the question as bordering on the irrelevant.

There is no precedent in modern times for the Princess's position: divorced from the Royal Family yet the mother of a future king. A clean break of the kind experienced by other royal divorcees, such as the Duchess of York, Captain Mark Phillips and Lord Snowdon, would not have been possible. The Queen has been obliged to recognise her as a member of the inner circle in all but name and style.

The Duchess of York did not pose such a problem, as her children, Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie, are regarded as being too far down the line of succession at fifth and sixth ever to be likely to take the throne.

If she wishes, the Princess may retain all her other titles, and is at liberty to call herself Diana, Duchess of Cornwall, Duchess of Rothesay, Countess of Chester, Countess of Carrick and Baroness Renfrew.

King George V decided that the style Royal Highness could be borne by the children and grandchildren of a sover-

ign; grandsons could give it to their wives on marriage, but granddaughters could not give it to their husbands. Thus Princess Michael of Kent, married to a grandson of George V, is a Royal Highness, but Sir Angus Ogilvy, married to HRH Princess Alexandra, a granddaughter of George V, is not.

The Princess has relinquished all her armed services appointments, which were few and not onerous; she has until now been colonel-in-chief of the Light Dragoons and the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshire) as well as two regiments in Canada and the Royal Australian Survey Corps.

She also loses her office in St James's Palace, which since the departure of her private secretary Patrick Jephson has been reduced to a skeleton secretarial staff of two. The enforced move to Kensington

Palace, in her own living quarters, is designed to avoid constant meetings with her former husband, whose own considerable suite of offices and staff occupy a large part of St James's Palace.

But the divorce agreement has considerable concessions. The Princess, with the Queen's permission, may use St James's for entertaining, and use the aircraft of the Royal Squadron, as can all other members of the Royal Family with the sovereign's consent.

Again in common with other members of the Queen's family, the Princess may occasionally undertake official functions at home and abroad, but she will be unable to do them of her own volition. The request will have to come from the Queen, and she will act only on the advice of ministers. The Princess's desire to be some unspecified kind of roving ambassador has not been furthered by the settlement, and she will be unable to travel abroad — except for private holidays — without royal consent and Foreign Office advice.

The fact that the Princess will have to ask the Queen's permission for such travel, and the fact that she must also ask permission to spend any public money, is in its curious way an affirmation that she remains, to all intents and purposes, a member of the Royal Family. A mere commoner could hardly be placed under similar restraints.

It is also a safeguard, although probably an unnecessary one, that her children remain under the watchful eye of their father and grandmother.

The titles which the Princess can keep if she wishes all derive from her husband, and are traditional dukedoms, earldoms and baronies associated with the heir to the throne. The Princess brought no title to the marriage except that of Lady Diana Spencer, daughter of an earl.



The Princess visiting the Light Dragoons, of which she is colonel-in-chief

Princess bids farewell to arms

THOUSANDS of Britain's military will no longer receive morale-boosting visits by the Princess of Wales because she has asked to relinquish all of her Service appointments as part of the agreed divorce settlement.

She is currently colonel-in-chief of the Light Dragoons and Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, which was sent to Northern Ireland earlier this week.

Both regiments were formed in 1992 as a result of the Options for Change cut-backs after the end of the Cold War.

SERVICE APPOINTMENTS

Army sources said it was "very unlikely" that the name of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment would be changed as it was named after an ancient British title rather than the Princess herself.

The regiment already has a second colonel-in-chief, Queen Margreth II of Denmark, unlike the Light Dragoons, currently based in Germany.

The Army said it was not necessary for a regiment to have a colonel-in-chief, consequently, the Light Dra-

goons were likely to do without for the foreseeable future.

The Princess will stand down as Honorary Air Commodore of the Harrier jump-jet base at RAF Wittering, Cambs and cut links with the HMS Vanguard, the first Trident ballistic missile nuclear submarine, and the frigate HMS Cornwall.

She will also relinquish the Colonel-in-Chief post of a number of regiments in Canada and Australia.

No argument when future of the Princes was discussed

THE CHILDREN

UNDER the terms of their divorce the Prince and Princess of Wales will share access to their sons (Adrian Lee writes). Prince William and Prince Harry are at boarding schools, but during holidays they will divide their time equally between their parents. They spent yesterday with their mother at Kensington Palace.

The divorce wrangling did not extend to the boys. Their father and mother agreed that the boys, aged 14 and 11, should have as normal an upbringing as possible involving both parents.

The Princess is expected to take her sons on holiday next week. Royal sources said that she may be planning a trip to Spain or the United States.

The Queen is known to be keen to have a role in her grandsons' upbringing. She has particular concern for William, the future King. The divorce does not affect the line of succession.

William, a goodlooking teenager who has become a pin-up for girls of his age, is more introverted than his younger brother. Harry was seen this week in public laughing and joking, seemingly oblivious to his parents' turmoil.

At the Royal Tournament, accompanied by his brother and Henry and Thomas van Straubenzee, nephews of one of the Princess's oldest friends, Harry indulged in horseplay during the National Anthem. He is known as "the daredevil Prince".

The Prince and Princess had been living separate lives for so long that the boys were well prepared for the divorce. The Princess has not tried to hide details, visiting them at school in 1992 to break news of the separation, then driving to Eton to update William on developments.

In her Panorama interview last November, the Princess said: "They took it as children

do, lots of questions, and I hoped I was able to reassure them. But who knows?" William is said to have been told by his father about his relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles.

Prince Harry is a pupil at Ludgrove School, in Wokingham, Berkshire. He was recently described by staff as a "happy little chap". Yesterday Gerald Barber, the joint headmaster of Ludgrove, said he had not noticed any recent change in behaviour. "Prince Harry has been in very good form this term and played a full part in school life." A keen sportsman, he has played for the under-11 cricket team.

Ludgrove and Eton are said to censor newspaper reports and television programmes to protect the Princes. On one occasion, when William was at Ludgrove, the school bus was reportedly sent on a detour so he would not see newsgatherers' billboards about the feud between his parents.

The Princess, herself the product of a broken home, recognises that both parents must play a part if the Princes are not to bear deep emotional scars of the divorce. The separation of her parents, when she was aged six, and the ensuing custody battle left its mark.

The rare joint public appearances by the Prince and Princess have usually been with their children. Whatever their problems, Prince Charles has never doubted his wife's devotion to the children. She has tried to avoid the staid upbringing given to previous generations of royals, including her husband. Her sons have been encouraged to mix with other children and have enjoyed trips to McDonald's, go-kart tracks and theme parks.

The boys appear to enjoy school, in contrast to the experiences of the Prince of Wales who had an unhappy time at Gordonstoun.

Kensington Palace offers privacy, safety — and short stroll to shops

By RICHARD FORD

THE Princess will continue to live at Kensington Palace, a home that provides her with security and privacy plus easy access to her favourite shopping haunts.

Her apartment is one of several occupied by members of the Royal Family including Princess Margaret, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent.

The external maintenance of her apartment will be paid for by the taxpayer but she will bear the cost of any internal changes and decorations.

Most estate agents suggested that the Princess should remain at Kensington Palace

rather than seek other property in London. "She is really going to get more security and privacy at Kensington Palace. It is an ideal location for her," one said.

Since the royal separation the Princess has not had a house in the country and it is unclear whether she will use part of the divorce settlement to buy her own house in the Home Counties.

London agents were divided on the likelihood of her purchasing a country home, with several suggesting that she had shown little interest in rural pursuits.

Most estimated that she

would need to spend between £2 million and £5 million to find a country house which would provide her with the necessary privacy plus accommodation for permanent staff.

One leading London agent said that the Princess could acquire a smart seven-bedroom country house with an entrance lodge within an hour of London for about £2.5 million. If she was willing to be two hours away from London, a similar property would cost about £1.5 million.

The agent said any house she bought would need a long drive to ensure that any intruder could be "brought

down" before reaching the front door.

But the agents are agreed that she would need to spend up to £10 million to achieve the kind of seclusion enjoyed by leading members of the aristocracy whose homes are set deep in acres of land.

A spokeswoman for Savills said: "Unless she buys somewhere surrounded by lots of acres, she is buying herself a problem because she will not have complete privacy and without that what will her life be like?"

One option for the Princess would be to return to her family home at Althorp in Northamptonshire, now that her brother is living in South Africa.



The Queen Mary tiara, sapphire pendant from Saudi Arabia, engagement ring, and wedding present sapphire

Lifetime's lease for royal heirlooms

By RICHARD FORD

THE Princess of Wales is to keep a multimillion pound collection of jewellery given to her since her engagement. But she has agreed that special Royal Family items will revert to the family on her death.

The deal reached with the Princess ensures royal jewels will not be sold on the open market, where they would fetch huge prices because of their links with the monarchy. Special pieces include those worn by Queen Mary (wife of George V) and Queen Alexandra (wife of Edward VII).

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said last night: "The Princess has agreed that jewels given to her by the Roy-

al Family will remain with her for her lifetime, and thereafter, as is the tradition, will revert to the Royal Family."

Before her marriage, the Princess owned little spectacular jewellery and since the separation she has rarely been seen wearing gifts such as those from the Queen and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother on her engagement and marriage.

The most important piece in her collection is the Queen Mary tiara, which was made by Garrard, the Crown Jeweller, in 1914 and was a personal gift to the Princess from the Queen on her mar-

riage. The Queen also gave the Princess an Art Deco style emerald and diamond necklace which Diana later wore as a headband during a tour of Australia. It, too, had once belonged to Queen Mary, the Queen's grandmother.

The Princess's engagement present from the Queen Mother was a chain with a diamond Prince of Wales feather oval pendant and emerald drop. It once belonged to Queen Alexandra. The Queen Mother gave the Princess on her wedding day a Sri Lankan ink-blue oval sapphire brooch set in diamonds. The Princess, who

rarely wears brooches, made it the centrepiece of a multi-stranded pearl choker. It is estimated that the huge sapphire and pearl could fetch more than £1.5 million.

Necklaces, bracelets and rings given to Diana by the Prince, including her £28,500 diamond and sapphire engagement ring, also form part of her collection. The Prince gave her an Art Deco emerald and diamond bracelet with matching earrings, an inscribed gold medallion to mark the birth of Prince William, and a black and white pearl necklace for her twenty-first birthday.

Those, too, will remain in the Royal Family along with gifts made during state visits.

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6 HOME NEWS

Agitated driver was seen hiding bag after double killing

BY BILL FROST

A WITNESS was under police protection last night after he told officers that he may have made eye contact with the killer of Lin Russell and her six-year-old daughter Megan.

He was walking his dog on an isolated path across a cornfield when he saw a man park in a lay-by and hide a bag in a hedge. Knowing that puppies had been abandoned there in the past, the witness investigated as the car drove away and found a white string bag containing clothing.

The man, who has not been named, thought no more about the incident on Tuesday until he heard of the murders in a news bulletin the following morning. He contacted police who last night said the witness's evidence was "deeply significant".

Detective Chief Inspector David Stevens, who is leading the murder inquiry, said that the man who abandoned the bag was "slightly built, be-

tween 35 and 40, about 5ft 6in tall with light-coloured hair and acting at the time he was seen in an agitated manner". He was driving a family saloon car, possibly a Ford Escort.

Police have recovered the bag he tried to hide, which is believed to have contained a swimsuit and towels belonging to Megan Russell and her sister Josephine, 9, who was last night still unconscious with multiple head wounds. The items had been removed from the murder scene outside the Kent village of Goodneston.

Mr Stephens said the witness had told his officers that the car driver parked in the lay-by, "trotted" to the hedge and concealed the bag. At one point he climbed the bank beside the lane to see if anyone else was around.

"We are convinced that this person had something to do with the crime," he added. "He was seen at about 5pm [half an

hour after the murders]. We think there is every chance that the killer may have seen our witness, actually made eye contact.

"It is an isolated area and there is every indication that this person had knowledge of it." There was certainly an element of planning in the killings, he said.

Mr Stephens said that his officers were looking at "various local people" in connection with the investigation. No murder weapon had been recovered yet.

Lin Russell, 45, was walking her children from school to their home in Nonington when the killer struck. He bludgeoned his victims repeatedly with a blunt instrument, almost certainly a hammer.

Mrs Russell's husband Shaun was last night at the bedside of Josephine. Detectives were also at the London hospital waiting to interview her once she regains consciousness.



Shaun Russell with daughters Megan, left, and Josephine. Yesterday he was waiting at Josephine's bedside for her to regain consciousness

Woman is killed by grandson's pit bull terrier

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

A WOMAN was killed yesterday when she was savaged by her grandson's pit bull terrier in her back garden. Margaret Crisp, 76, died of throat injuries.

Her husband Cyril, 84, was bitten on the hands and arms when he and a woman police officer tried to pull the dog off. Mr Crisp, a retired council gardener, received treatment in hospital after the attack in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The 23-year-old officer escaped injury, although she was said to be badly shaken.

The dog, which was eventually secured in a garden shed, was destroyed on the spot by a police marksman. A second pit bull terrier kept at the couple's home by their grandson, Wayne, was barking in the garden at the time of the attack but did not join in. It was later taken away in a dog warden's van. The two dogs were normally quartered in the shed within a wire-fenced compound in the garden.

Above a picture of a snarling black dog at the gate of the detached house is the warning: "Caution - I am on guard here. Enter at your own risk."

Workers at a glazier's yard next door to the house heard Mrs Crisp screaming and saw the terrier on top of her when they looked over the fence.

David Stennett, 34, manager of CS Glass, said: "We were in the office when we heard a woman screaming. We looked over our fence, which is about 6ft high, and saw her lying on the ground in the back garden with the dog biting into the side of her throat."

"An elderly man was desperately trying to pull the dog away. We ran round to the front of the house to see if we could get in and help and a

woman police officer was passing by. She went in and tried to help the man but the dog would not let go."

"Then Mrs Crisp's granddaughter Tiffany drove up and went to help the old man. He said: 'I think it's killed her.' The dog was still holding on."

Lester Maddrell, the Cheltenham coroner, later visited the scene. A post-mortem and an inquest will be held.

Inspector Dean Walker of Gloucestershire Police praised the bravery of the WPC and said: "She helped wrestle the dog into its shed after the attack. She was on the beat in the area when she was alerted to the commotion going on. She entered the property and approached the dog. She helped restrain it and secure it in the shed. She has been very shocked by the incident but is still on duty."

Dr April Jones, a Home Office expert on dangerous dogs, said it was believed to be the first time anyone had been killed in Britain by a bull terrier.

Dave Charles, a near neighbour of the Crisp family, said: "This isn't the first time those dogs have been trouble. About three years ago one of them killed our pet cat, Splat. The Crisps came over to see us and apologise. Margaret was a lovely lady. She used to look after the dogs for her grandchildren."

Mrs Crisp's brother-in-law, Dennis Crisp, 90, of Cheltenham, said: "This is terrible news. Margaret was a lovely woman - very kind-hearted. It's just shocking that such a thing could happen."

Under the 1991 Dangerous Dogs Act pit bulls have to be registered and neutered and muzzled in a public place.

Rothschild to be buried in London

BY ADRIAN LEE AND BEN MACINTYRE

THE financier Amschel Rothschild, who was found hanged in a Paris hotel earlier this week, will be buried at a Jewish cemetery on Monday following a private service conducted by Rabbi Julia Neuberger, a family friend.

Relatives of Mr Rothschild, 41, will have to pay several thousand pounds to have him buried at the Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Willesden, north London, because he was not a member of a synagogue.

Some members of the Rothschild family are members of the Liberal Jewish synagogue in St John's Wood, which owns the Willesden cemetery. Membership carries the right to free burial but the cost of a prime site for a non-member could be as much as £10,000.

The Rothschild family flew Amschel's body home to Britain early yesterday morning, just hours after French investigators formally concluded that he had committed suicide by hanging himself in a bathroom at the Hotel Bristol. He did not leave a note and an inquest will be held in England.

Sir Evelyn de Rothschild is now expected to tighten his

grip on the City merchant bank N M Rothschild. Amschel had long been seen as his heir apparent. However, in the past couple of years his star had been on the wane, largely due to the poor performance of Rothschild Asset Management, which he chaired. Sir Evelyn may postpone plans to hand over power to his expected heir apparent, Paris-based David de Rothschild.

In recent interviews, Sir Evelyn, 64, had hinted heavily that David, ten years his junior, would take control of the London merchant bank, despite David's side of the family having only a small shareholding and the British family owning 75 per cent of the shares. However, this was against the background of Amschel being in a senior position as a representative of the controlling shareholder.

A merchant banker close to Sir Evelyn says he now believes he will remain as chairman for as many as ten more years. This would allow his teenage sons, Anthony and David, to join the bank and gain enough experience to take positions of power.

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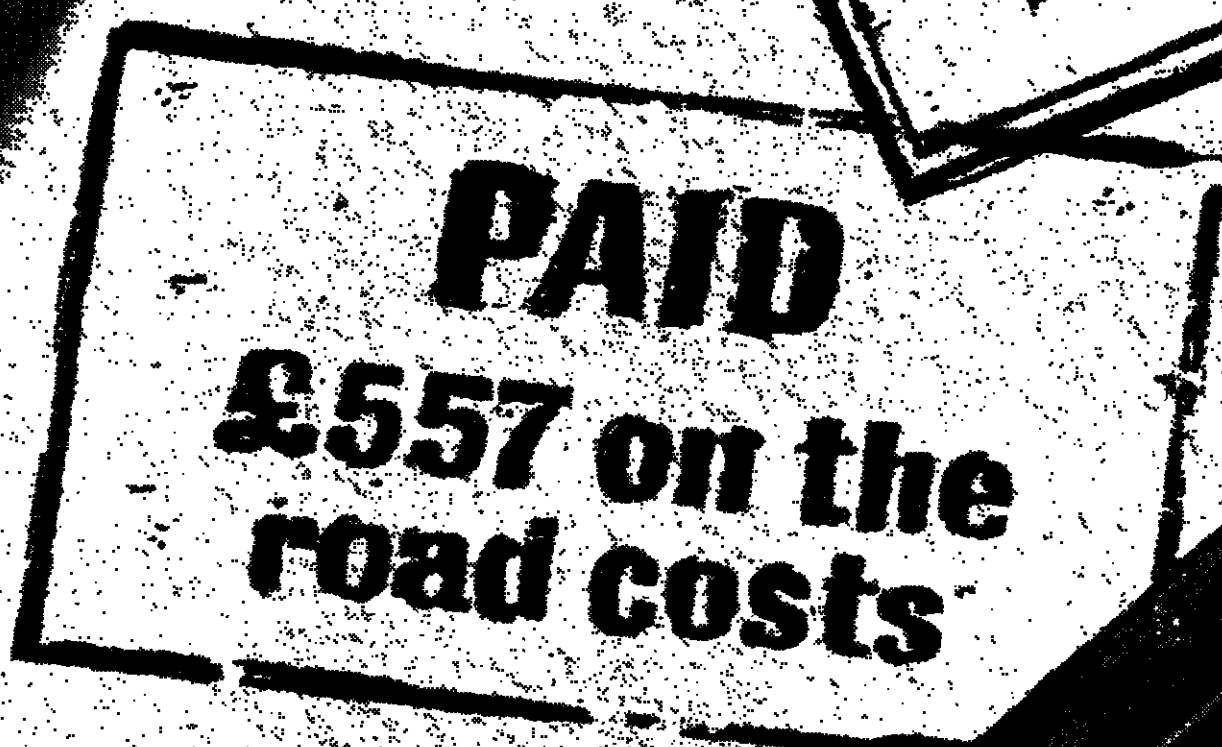
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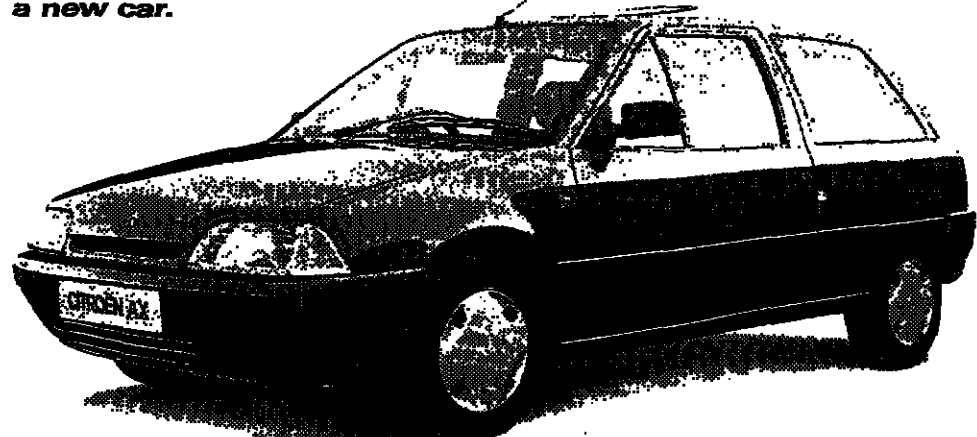
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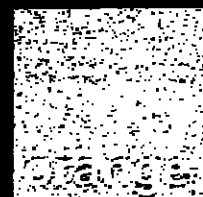
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Dublin vents republican fury over RUC tactics on parades

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE most volatile marching season for a decade in Ulster came to a climax yesterday as a row over policing damaged Anglo-Irish relations.

Government sources in Dublin said that John Bruton had a "difficult and frank" conversation with John Major when he explained the nationalist fury at the RUC's handling of this year's loyalist marching season.

The exchange came as more than 100,000 Orangemen and women took to the streets of Northern Ireland to mark the Protestant victory in the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

Most of the parades passed off peacefully, although armed police and soldiers mounted a huge security operation to allow an Orange parade to pass along the nationalist Lower Ormeau Road in south Belfast. Nationalists, including Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, were hemmed into side roads behind police.

Nationalists shouted abuse

as the loyalists proceeded into the city centre to join tens of thousands of other Orangemen for the main July 12 parade through Belfast. More than 100 bands, accompanied by ten District Lodges from Northern Ireland and others from overseas, marched from the centre of the city to the Edenderry Field on the outskirts of south Belfast for the traditional speeches by Orange leaders.

While the parades passed off relatively peacefully, the Government was counting the political cost yesterday as nationalists protested and Dublin made clear its anger at the RUC decision to allow loyalists to march into Portadown on Thursday along the Catholic Garvaghy Road.

The decision led to nationalist riots throughout Northern Ireland on Thursday night. Protesters threw more than 900 petrol bombs at police in the Bogside area and in the city centre. Police fired dozens



Gerry Adams watching from behind police lines as Orangemen march along the Ormeau Road

of plastic bullets. More than 50 people were injured, of whom 12 were treated in hospital, mostly for plastic bullet wounds. A 19-year-old man had to be treated in intensive care.

At one stage police baton-charged protesters in the casualty department of Londonderry's Altnagelvin Hospital. A police spokesman said: "At around 3am a hostile crowd confronted police officers pro-

viding security for injured colleagues who were receiving treatment. A small number of officers were forced to draw their batons and, with the assistance of a police dog, dispersed the unruly mob who had gathered in the waiting area."

Three police officers had to be treated in hospital after suspected republican terrorists opened fire on them in Belfast early yesterday. Two of

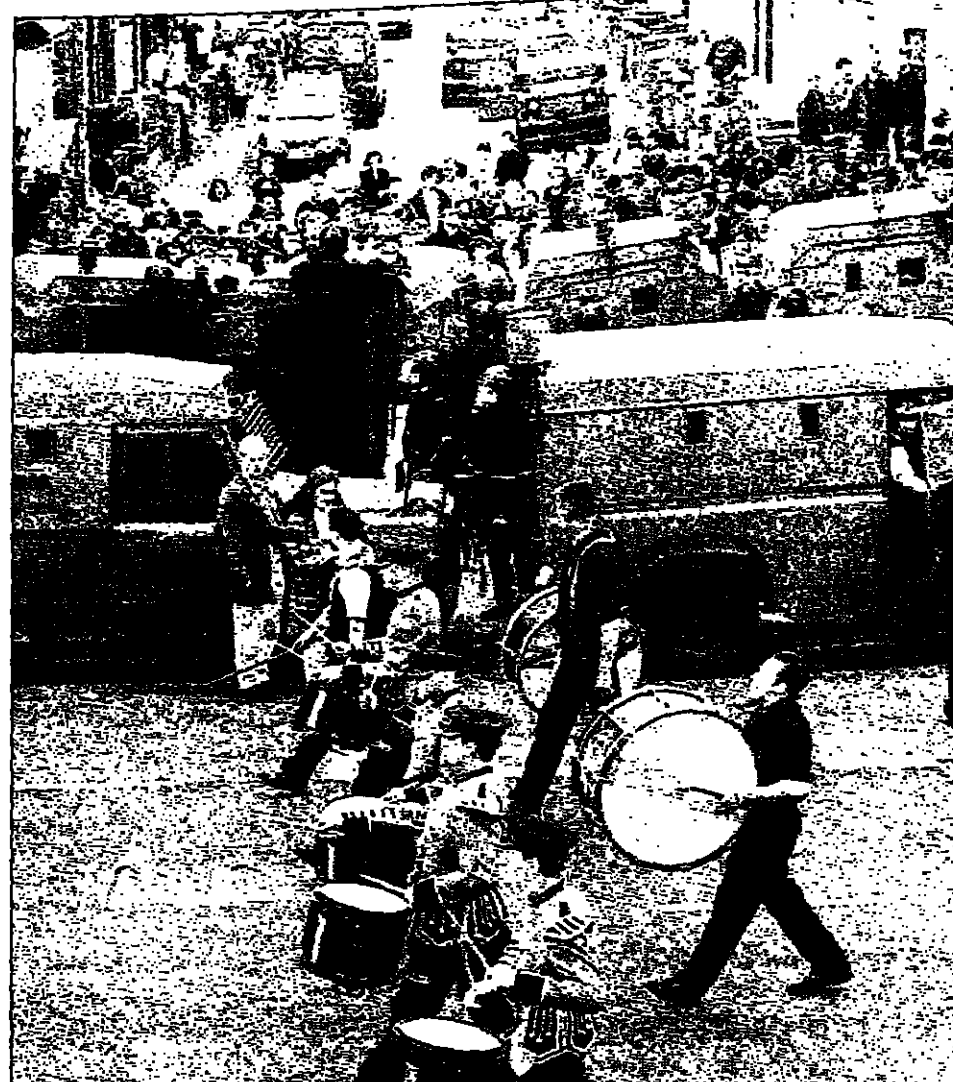
the officers were released later in the day.

Sources in Dublin said that Mr Bruton feared that the handling of this year's marching season would cause incalculable damage to the peace process. They said that the RUC's "abrupt reversal" of its decision on the Drumcree march would make it more difficult to convince the IRA to restore its ceasefire.

Mr Bruton spoke of his "grave concern" at the upsurge in violence. He also called for an independent body to examine future contentious Orange parades. Mr Major defended the RUC's actions and condemned the rioting. He denied that any political pressure had been brought to bear on the RUC chief constable, who had made an operational decision. He added: "If the chief constable had not acted as he did, lives would have been lost. I wonder what Sinn Féin would have said then."

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, appealed for both communities to act responsibly.

Letters, page 23



Catholic residents hemmed in as an Orange band passes through south Belfast yesterday

An offer for people with a lot to say.

After Orange drums fade, nationalists march in step

ANALYSIS: MICHAEL GOVE

THE beat of the Lambeg drum across Ulster yesterday did not sound the end of the peace process, but it did mark a retreat on all sides from the barely learnt habits of compromise to traditional positions behind sectarian barricades.

Nationalist anger is still at a high pitch, even among moderate SDLP politicians such as Seamus Mallon and Alex Attwood and natural conciliators such as the Catholic primate Cardinal Cahal Daly. A perception exists across nationalist Ireland that the British state abdicated its responsibility to be a neutral referee between Ulster's Catholics and Protestants by caving in to Orange pressure at Drumcree.

The decision to allow Portadown's Orangemen to march is seen by nationalists as a victory for physical force and threatened violence. The fact that the march was halted by the RUC in the first place because of fears of unrest among nationalist residents along the disputed route is eclipsed by the sense that unionists have won by reminding the Government that they have the greater numbers.

The unionists have, however, been a divided majority recently. David Trimble's willingness to compromise within peace talks and to accept George Mitchell, the American former senator, as chairman has been criticised by the Rev. Ian Paisley, the DUP leader, and Robert McCartney, the United Kingdom Unionist Group MP. By accepting a man seen as a nationalist nominee, Mr Trimble has been under pressure to reassure his grassroots that he stands firm on core principles. His role in the resolution of the siege of Drumcree has done that.

Having consolidated his base, Mr Trimble will realise if any progress is to be made towards reconciliation. Wisely, he has not preened after this week's events but moderate voices within Unionism hope he can do more by making an imaginative and open gesture to acknowledge

nationalist concerns. But worryingly for those who wish to see democrats working together, the events of the past week have seen divisions deepen between Protestant and Catholic and muddled between the moderates and extremists on either side. The shift to old certainties is most marked among nationalists.

Only last month it seemed as though there was a chance to isolate the IRA from Middle Ireland. The Manchester bomb, the murder of a policeman and the discovery of an IRA bomb factory in the Republic had driven Dublin further from the IRA than at any time since the horrific bombings at Enniskillen and Warrington.

But the prominent role Sinn Féin activists have played in focusing nationalist feeling at this week's flashpoints while publicly preaching restraint has allowed republicans to make up lost ground. Irish parliamentarians in Ulster have expressed their solidarity with nationalist anger led by Sinn Féin activists. There is a sense that the pan-nationalist consensus may have been rebuilt.

The divide between democrats in the North is mirrored by the gulf between London and Dublin. The anger of John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, at not being informed of the RUC's decision at Drumcree reflects a damaged relationship with John Major.

Mr Bruton's anger will, additionally, only confirm Unionist fears that Dublin exercises undue and unwelcome influence over public order within the Province. It will reinforce darker suspicions among Unionists about the South's long-term ambitions to take an ever-growing role in the government of Ulster.

With anger slow to cool in nationalist hearts and random violence on the streets, it will take a rare effort on behalf of politicians to promote calm. Sooner or later the search for stability and respect for the practices of democracy will have to resume, but this weekend it is difficult to see how.



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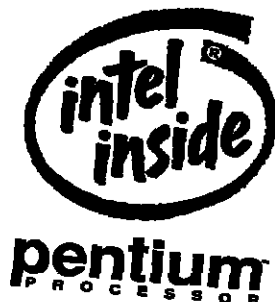
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Woman QC attacks 'inexperience' of new female judge

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

THE inauguration of Scotland's first female judge for 500 years led yesterday to an attack on her experience by another of the country's top women lawyers.

Lynda Clark, one of seven female QCs in Scotland, questioned Sheriff Hazel Aronson's experience and hinted that she was not the most worthy candidate.

Sheriff Aronson, 50, who has been a temporary judge for four years, took her place on the Bench beside 14 men. Draped in the red robes of office, she was sworn in by Lord Hope of Craighead, Lord President of the Court of Session, in a solemn ceremony in the splendour of Parliament House, Edinburgh. She will be known as Lady Cosgrove.

In a statement to *The Scotsman*, Ms Clark, 46, who is also the Labour prospective parliamentary candidate for Malcolm Rifkind's seat, Edinburgh Pentlands, said that Lady Cosgrove's experience

had been limited by her decision to leave the Bar when she was a junior counsel to become a sheriff. All Scotland's other judges have been appointed after years at the senior Bar.

"She abandoned the challenge of a career at the Bar at the time when many of the barriers and difficulties remained," Ms Clark said. "It was left to other women to deal with problems and expand their expertise and experience into the full range of civil and criminal law. I think Hazel would have found her new appointment easier and less cause for anxiety if she had chosen to spend long enough at the Bar to gain that experience which many people regard as indispensable."

Lady Cosgrove, who has spoken in the past about women's struggle to be accepted in the legal profession, and who has brought up two children, was unable to reply to Ms Clark's attack: as a judge,

she has been asked not to give interviews. However, many lawyers at yesterday's ceremony expressed disappointment at Ms Clark's remarks.

She surprised her colleagues when Lord Hope announced that she would drop her maiden name and be known as Lady Cosgrove. Her husband John Cosgrove, a dentist and a spokesman for the Edinburgh Jewish community, said: "It was her choice of name. When she came to the Scottish Bar she wanted to be known as Hazel Cosgrove, but the then Dean of the Faculty and officials decreed she should use her maiden name, as was the custom in 1968."

Mr Cosgrove, who has said that his wife is more excited about the prospect of becoming a grandmother for the first time later this year than becoming a judge, said: "Being Lady Cosgrove will solve one problem. If she had not taken that title we would



Lady Cosgrove with her mother Julie Burton at the inauguration yesterday

have had to book into hotels as Lady Aronson and Mr Cosgrove. Now we will have the same name."

Lady Cosgrove's appointment to the Bench was hailed as a breakthrough for women by Isabel Sinclair, one of Scotland's first female advocates, who is now retired. "I am happier than I can say. It is an historic day. In time, it will be an everyday event to

have a woman appointed to the Scottish Bench and the day will come when there will be a Lady President of the Court of Session," she said.

Nick Cosgrove, Lady Cosgrove's son, later defended his mother against Ms Clark's attack. "I cannot speak for Mum, but it just sounds carry to me. It is very hurtful, sour grapes. It doesn't help the case of women in the professions

who have broken the glass ceiling, as Mum has, to have another woman criticise her."

He added: "She's an amazing person. She gets up at 7am and just gets on with it."

Briton is guilty of 'Jane Doe' murder

A BRITON was convicted yesterday of murdering his girlfriend, who became known in Australia as "Jane Doe" in the four months it took to identify her body.

Judge Peter Hidden said in the New South Wales Supreme Court that he was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that Vivianne Ruiz, 21, died at the hands of Richard White, 27, of Bexley, Kent.

The decomposing body of Miss Ruiz, also known as Lynda Lasen, was found wrapped in rubbish bags on a street in Arncliffe, a Sydney suburb, in December 1991.

Ms Ruiz, who had worked as a prostitute and dancer in Sydney's King's Cross red light district, had been strangled and had newspaper stuffed down her throat. A fingerprint on the newspaper was identified as belonging to White.

White was arrested by British police in Newcastle upon Tyne in April 1992.

Judge Hidden, who conducted the trial without a jury, adjourned sentencing to a date to be fixed.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE DUNBLANE PARENTS' STORY

Usually when we got to school, Charlotte jumped out and ran off to her friends without a backward glance. That morning she did something she had never done before — she ran back and kissed me . . .

In their first newspaper interviews, the parents of Dunblane describe the day their children were killed. News Review. The Sunday Times tomorrow

Killers are given extra jail terms for breaking out

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

TWO murderers whose escape from jail led to the sacking of the head of the Prison Service were given additional jail sentences yesterday for their carefully executed breakout.

Keith Rose, 47, was given three years and Andrew Rodger, 46, 30 months for what a judge described as a "well-planned escape" from Parkhurst top-security jail on the Isle of Wight in 1994.

Judge Dunn, QC, told Woolwich Crown Court that but for the jury's recommendation of mercy both men would have been punished more severely. "You and others like-minded to break out of prison should understand clearly that it is a serious offence."

Rose, who has been told he must spend the rest of his life in jail, had been convicted of murder and kidnapping, and Rodger of murder. They spent five days on the run during which they tried to use a light aircraft to flee the island.

The men, who were convicted of breaking out of prison earlier this week, had had a ladder constructed in the prison welding shop and a key made that was used to open several external gates and doors. The judge said that part

of Rose's aim in escaping from Parkhurst was to gain publicity for his long campaign to get a retrial on the murder charge. While he accepted Rose had a genuine grievance after the Home Office scrapped the 20 years of his life sentence he would have to serve before becoming eligible for parole, ruling instead he would never be released, the judge said he did not believe Rose's claim that he had been so depressed he would have committed suicide if he had not broken out.

He told Rodger, whose minimum sentence had been increased from 12 to 17 years, that he did not believe he was on the point of suicide.

Despite their pasts — Rose shot six bullets into a supermarket chief's wife, and Rodger battered a night-watchman to death — the killers won the sympathy of the nine men and three women who tried them.

A third escaper, Matthew Williams, 26, has admitted breaking out of prison and will be sentenced later.

The report into their escape and jail security led to the sacking of Derek Lewis, Director-General of the Prison Service, in October last year.

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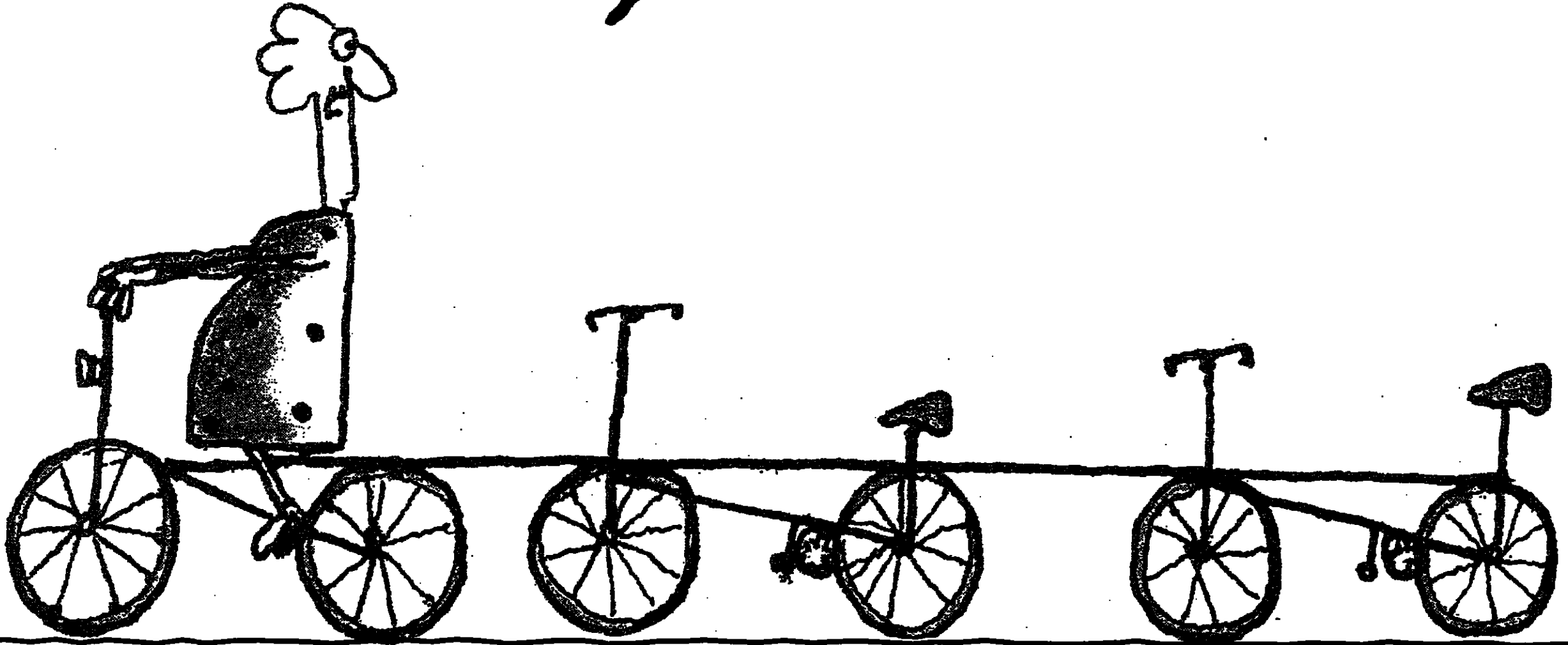
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NEVER SMOKE

EU threatens retaliation over Cuba trade embargo

By CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS AND MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE European Union has warned the United States that it could restrict American visas, freeze American assets and resort to other measures if it goes ahead with legislation aimed at penalising foreign investors in Cuba.

The European Commission outlined the possible retaliation in a stiff letter to the State Department as anger mounted in Europe after the first American action against British and other businessmen under the so-called Helms-Burton Act.

Jacques Santer, the Commission President, backed the threat with a direct appeal to President Clinton on Thursday to waive the controversial part of the trade law, which gives powers to keep foreign executives and their families out of America and enables former Cuban citizens to sue foreign companies which "profit" from property seized by the island's Communist Government.

Prospects of a new trade war rose this week when the Americans sent letters to nine executives and directors of

Sherritt International, a Canadian mining company, saying they and their families would be barred from America unless their company moved out of Cuba. Two of the directors are Sir Patrick Sheehy, a former chairman of BAT Industries, and Rupert Pennant-Rea, former Deputy Governor of the Bank of England.

EU officials are working in Washington this weekend to defuse the looming crisis ahead of a foreign ministers' meeting on Monday where governments will co-ordinate possible retaliation against Washington. At the least, the EU would apply for tough action from the World Trade Organisation, officials said. Sir Leon Brittan, the Trade Commissioner, said Washington must be prepared for a "determined, effective response", should the Helms-Burton Act become law.

In France, the Government accused Washington of breaching its international commitments. "If the legislation is applied, we plan to react with appropriate measures," the Foreign Ministry

said. But Washington last night was publicly proclaiming the success of its law punishing foreign companies deemed to be using confiscated American property in Cuba, even as some officials privately admitted that they are shaken by the international outcry.

"Businesses are fleeing Cuba," declared Jesse Helms, the ultra-conservative North Carolina senator who sponsored the Helms-Burton Act. "Fidel Castro is having to scramble to hold on to investors who are already there. Many businessmen who were considering investing in Castro's regime are beginning to realise what is at stake, and they are deciding to stay out."

Nicholas Burns, the State Department spokesman, claimed that four European companies had stopped investing in the Cuban sugar industry for fear of American reprisals, and the giant Mexican cement company Cemex had stopped its Cuban operations. He also claimed two Canadian executives of Sherritt International, which

became the law's first victim, had left the company for fear of American reprisals. A spokesman for the executives insisted they left months ago for different reasons.

The Americans "need to talk [the Act] up, and that is what they are doing. They are puffing it up," said one senior British official.

After Britain, Canada, Mexico and the EU condemned the Helms-Burton Act, one well-placed Washington source said the Administration had been "shaken" by its allies' threats of retaliation.

Mr Clinton must weigh that anger against his desire to win the key electoral state of Florida in November's presidential election. By early next week he must decide whether to waive a provision of the Act allowing American citizens who lost property in the 1959 Cuban revolution to sue foreign companies using that property. The Treasury and State Department are pressing for a waiver, but that would expose him to Republican charges of being soft on Fidel Castro and communism.



Saddam, waving benevolently to crowds in Baghdad, is known for moving ruthlessly against opponents

Saddam foils coup plot by officers

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

DOZENS of Iraqi military officers have reportedly been executed after President Saddam Hussein foiled an attempted coup.

The move was the latest of many abortive plots to oust Saddam since he ordered the

invasion of Kuwait six years ago. Other reports from Baghdad said there had also been an attempt to assassinate the Iraqi leader by enlisting one of his cooks to lace his food with poison, a favoured technique of Saddam's security forces to kill his opponents.

A well-placed independent Iraqi source said: "We are

continuing to hear of unrest within the army and inside Saddam's inner circle. Despite his ruthlessness and the fate of those who have betrayed him in the past, Iraqis are still willing to risk their lives to remove him. He has a reputation of moving against people before they even think of moving against him — it has helped him to stay in power."

Iraqi dissidents said at least 50 officers were arrested last month on suspicion of preparing a military attack to topple the Iraqi leader. The suspects were all said to be Sunni Muslims, who form the backbone of the army's command and the security services, and some of them were trusted officers from Saddam's home town of Tikrit. A coup attempt was also reported by the Arabic daily, *al-Hayat*.

As many as 120 officers from Baghdad, Karbala and Salahuddin were arrested, the Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation, an opposition radio sta-

tion, reported. It said they had been charged with plotting against the regime and that dozens had been executed since the beginning of July.

"The investigations, interrogations and executions are being personally conducted by Qusai [Saddam's youngest son and head of security]," the radio said.

Iraqi dissidents said the conspirators hoped to enlist the support of senior army commanders. Among those said to have been arrested were Brigadier Suhail al-Adami, an army division commander, and Colonel Adnan Ali al-Tai, a brigade commander in southern Iraq.

General Hamid Shiban, a native of Tikrit and commander of the air force during the Iran-Iraq war, was also arrested but later freed after he persuaded the Iraqi leader he had no knowledge of the plot, according to *al-Hayat*. The plotters had apparently wanted General Shiban to be head of state.

Netanyahu will order Arafat offices to close

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, will demand that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, shut four Palestinian offices in occupied east Jerusalem, Israeli media said yesterday.

Army radio said the demand to close the offices, which the Government believes contravene the 1993 peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, would be made next week. The offices affected are the Islamic Affairs unit at Temple Mount, the PLO headquarters at Orient House, which foreign diplomats visit, plus those dealing with statistics and education.

The newspaper, *Haaretz*, said Mr Netanyahu told lead-

ers in the United States "that Israel will not compromise with respect to its demand that Palestinian institutions be closed in Jerusalem". The Government claims that the peace accord prohibits the Palestinian Authority from undertaking any governmental activity in Jerusalem.

The prospect of the impending closure has heightened tension. Faisal al-Husseini, the top PLO official in Jerusalem who is based at Orient House, a former hotel that serves as the PLO's unofficial "Foreign Ministry", said: "To say that Jerusalem is not an issue for negotiations and no compromise... that is saying there is no peace. We have returned to the days of war."

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Investigating magistrate uncovers seamier side of French finance

Ice queen sends a chill down tycoons' spines

MAURICE BIDERMAN, former head of the textile firm that bears his name and one of the most powerful industrialists in France, learnt the hard way that the jolliness of Eva Joly, an investigative magistrate, only goes so far.

They have met three times in the course of Mme Joly's inquiry into M Bidermann's dubious financial dealings. On the first occasion, the courtly businessman complimented the investigator on her dress; on the second he presented her with a book inscribed "To my magistrate"; at their third meeting, last May, Mme Joly clapped M Bidermann behind bars on suspicion of misusing company funds.

As examining magistrate or *juge d'instruction* for Paris since 1992, Mme Joly, 52, has burrowed deeper into the seamier recesses of French finance than any investigator of recent times, striking fear into the heart of the business elite.

With wide powers of search, seizure and imprisonment, the French investigative magistrate is often described as

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"the most powerful man in France". Mme Joly, by that token, is France's most powerful woman.

Her uncompromising approach was most emphatically illustrated this month when she netted her biggest fish so far: Loïc Le Floch-Prigent, the head of the state rail company SNCF, who is also suspected of misusing corporate assets when he was head of the giant oil company, Elf-Aquitaine. Last night Mme Joly searched the Paris headquarters of the SNCF. Under M Le Floch-Prigent's chairmanship, Elf allegedly poured £100 million into the ailing textile firm of Maurice Bidermann.

When M Le Floch-Prigent was remanded in custody at La Santé prison in Paris, his old friend was in the cell directly opposite. "If Le Floch

talks, the entire French political class, to the highest levels, is in danger of being implicated," one of Mme Joly's associates said, while the magistrate herself has noted that "the problem with this affair is to know where I ought to stop".

The French establishment has long relied on political pressure to hush up embarrassing scandals, but Mme Joly is a creature from a wholly unfamiliar mould.

A Norwegian who came to France as an *au pair* at the age of 18 speaking only a few words of French, she lacks the traditional respect for the clubby, almost exclusively male establishment that business and political leaders in this country have come to expect.

Such notables as Bernard Tapie, the former soccer tycoon and Socialist minister, Pierre Conso, head of Clements François and André Lévy-Lang have all found themselves hauled in front of Mme Joly and placed under investigation.

Known as the "Nordic Ice Queen" by her judicial colleagues, Mme Joly has a glacial interviewing technique that can leave the most swash-buckling captain of industry

in a muck sweat. One of her favourite interrogation methods is to brandish her monthly pay cheque, for Fr17,000 (£2,200), beneath the noses of businessmen earning at least 20 times that amount.

"She has a peculiar talent for reducing people to putty during interviews. She backs a chap into a corner in a position of weakness, and gives him the feeling that the world has come to an end," according to an admiring colleague.

Married to a French doctor and the mother of two, she has made more powerful enemies than anyone else in France in the last three years. She is under police protection after receiving death threats and allegedly having her telephone tapped.

M Tapie, bankrupt and facing long prison terms for match-rigging and tax evasion, a figure as flamboyant and extrovert as Mme Joly is dour and hard-nosed, may still be smarting from having his knuckles rapped by "The Scourge of the Bosses".

Two years ago, when Mme Joly sent officials to summon M Tapie from his vast Paris mansion to discuss a few tedious taxation questions, the extrovert magnate flew into a rage and refused to get dressed.

"Tell him to cool off," Mme Joly responded, "or he will pass quickly through my office on his way to the cells between a pair of gendarmes".

M Tapie promptly changed out of his pyjamas and trailed to the headmistress's office.



Eva Joly, seen as France's most powerful woman, is winning a reputation as the bosses' scourge after inspiring fear in the heart of the French business elite

Mystery of the modest writer

FOR months Parisian literary salons have been playing "spot the writer" after the publication of a best-selling novel by a mysterious author. *Lila dit ça* (Lila says so) purports to be by "Chimo", a 19-year-old boy from the violent inner city, and tells the tale of his love for Lila, a 16-

year-old temptress. Received literary opinion holds that Chimo is a figment invented by an established writer. The book's editor says he received the manuscript, written in school notebooks in a childish hand, from an unnamed lawyer. This week the plot thickened when

"Chimo" scrawled a letter to *Paris-Match* explaining that he would not reveal his identity. "I just don't want to," he said. If he does exist, then he is truly exceptional among French writers in wanting his words, but not his face, to appear in *Paris-Match*.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Berlusconi faces trial with Craxi

Milan: Silvio Berlusconi, the former Italian Prime Minister, was yesterday charged with illegal political party funding and ordered to stand trial with Bettino Craxi.

The former Socialist Prime Minister, and several senior managers at Signor Berlusconi's Fininvest media empire, were among the 12 people indicted. Judge Maurizio Grigo ruled that trial should begin on November 21.

Signor Berlusconi is accused of acquiescing in payments by Fininvest of 10 billion lire (£4.1 million) alleged to have been channelled to Signor Craxi in 1991 through All-Iberian, a Fininvest-linked company and Swiss bank accounts. (Reuters)

Caste slaughter

Patna: At least 20 low-caste Hindu villagers, mostly women and children, were killed by a militia run by upper-caste landowners in Bihar, raising fears of a caste war in the Indian state. (AFP)

Suicide bid

Sydney: Martin Bryant, the man charged with the massacre of 35 people in Tasmania last April, has attempted to hang himself. Infra-red cameras have now been installed in his cell.

Graf to be tried

Bonn: A German court has granted prosecutors' request to put the father of Steffi Graf, the tennis star, and Joachim Eckardt, one of his financial advisers, on trial for tax evasion. (Reuters)

Eta founder dies

Urrugne, France: Juan José Etxebarri, one of the founders of the Spanish Basque separatist group Eta, and an ex-commander of its armed wing, has died at his home in southern France, aged 58. (AFP)

Women's touch

Stockholm: Sweden was run entirely by female ministers for the first time this week, with Margareta Winberg as the acting Prime Minister, because their male colleagues were all on holiday. (AFP)

Dassault risks arrest

SERGE DASSAULT, head of the aviation company, is holding a dinner for the press at the Dorchester in London on September 1, to coincide with the Farnborough air show. But as the satirical weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné* pointed out, the British police may end up gatecrashing the

event and carting off the host. M Dassault faces an international warrant issued by Belgium as part of a corruption investigation into how his company obtained the contract to modernise the F16 squadron of the Belgian Air Force. If he leaves French soil he is liable to be arrested.

Expert stumbles on biblical lions in Ethiopian zoo

BY INIGO GILMORE
IN JOHANNESBURG
AND NICK NUTTALL

ZOOLOGISTS are excited by the "discovery" of 11 lions at a forgotten zoo in Ethiopia which bear a striking resemblance to biblical lions thought to have died out in Africa decades ago.

Hym Ebedes, a South African animal specialist at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute in Pre-

toria, saw a group of lions with long, wide black manes that reach under their bellies at a zoo in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. He says the male cats in the pride, descendants of a group of lions kept at the royal palace by Emperor Haile Selassie — hailed as the Lion of Judah — have the physical features of the North African Barbary lion or South Africa's Cape lion, thought to have been wiped out by white hunters during the colonial era.

"Over the past 35 years I have seen hundreds of wild lions, but I have never seen anything so majestic and magnificent," Mr Ebedes told a South African newspaper. "The sight of a black-maned lion pacing around his cage had an indescribable spine-chilling effect on me. The animal was exactly as I had always visualised and pictured the Cape lion, which became extinct 150 years ago." Barbary lions from the Atlas Mountains in what is now Morocco

were imported by the Romans for use in gladiatorial contests. The last of these animals was shot dead in the Atlas region in the 1920s.

The Cape lions, which closely resemble their North African cousins, were hunted by colonial farmers in the 19th century and were thought to have become extinct in the 1850s. The two subspecies of the same family probably developed similar features because cool winter climates and the lack of dense bush

allowed their manes to grow longer. The history of the pride in Addis Ababa, which includes three males, four lionesses and four cubs, is unclear. It is known that they came from Emperor Selassie's collection and were probably transferred to the zoo in 1974 after he was overthrown.

Last night Peter Jackson, chairman of the cat specialist group of the World Conservation Union in Switzerland, hailed the "exciting" news.



The majestic Barbary lion: was thought to be extinct

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■ GOING OUT

From Irving Penn to authentic Haydn: see Weekend, page 14, for the top events

RICHARD MORRISON

dances the three essentials of great musicals. But it does require a multimillion budget. And the bigger the budget, the more a producer tries to minimise risk. That is what is stifling lyrical and verbal creativity.

It is fashionable to blame Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber for this malaise. I don't. He is the master of the "whole concept" musical, and he plays to his strengths. *Jesus Christ Superstar* is not, and he isn't casting Stephen Sondheim for not writing the sort of tunes that bring mass popularity. At least he keeps the flame of literate humour flickering in what is fast becoming a tabloid genre.

No, my concern is this. Where is the new generation of people writing musicals? The answer is: nowhere very visible. Yet Britain has so much burgeoning compos-

mass finale led by Hugh Masekela, in a lifting treatment of *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*. National anthems are not supposed to sound as good as this.

The human voice, unadorned and undistorted, was the crucial ingredient in a much more consistent second half. Ladysmith Black Mambazo, who had opened the concert, returned with more of their majestic *cappella* anthems, and the younger generation shone in the meeting between the members of Shoshanguve Black Tycoons and Black Voices, a Birmingham quintet deploying close-harmony vocals redolent of Sweet Honey in the Rock. The more impressive of all was the

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DANCE

Dame Marie Rambert's company marks 70 years in fine style at the Coliseum



MUSIC

The subtle art of playing the piano: Maria-João Pires gives an exquisite recital

THE TIMES ARTS



BASE NOTES

Gilbert Kaplan, the amateur who adores Mahler, prepares to open the Salzburg Festival



BASE NOTES

Penelope Wilton, currently winning plaudits at the Young Vic, will star in Chekhov in the West End

Birthday present of the past

The Arts Council's decision to kill off London Contemporary Dance Theatre two years ago was an irresponsible and hasty act. But the loss of LCDT, one of the world's most established contemporary dance ensembles, did mean a new lease of life for its rival, Rambert. And here is Rambert, two years later, enjoying the fruits of enhanced funding, thriving under the artistic leadership of Christopher Bruce and packing out the Coliseum. Not bad for a troupe that was close to collapse itself at one point.

This week's Coliseum season had the air of celebration about it, and not just because this is Rambert's seventieth birthday. The company was back in London for the first time in four years, showing off an entirely new repertoire, performed by mostly new dancers.

In honour of the company's founder, the late Dame Marie Rambert, Bruce whipped up a little number that pays tribute to her love of dance and the tenacity that kept her beleaguered company going all those years. It is called *Quicksilver* (the title of Rambert's 1962 autobiography and the name she was given as a particularly active child). Dancers tread through wicker trunks of old costumes, unswerving snippets of memory as they go. A girl in a red dress, presumably Rambert herself, clutches her beloved

DANCE

Rambert Dance Company Coliseum

hat: the hat is then passed on — the dance, too.

The movement is fragmented and full of affectionate references (such as Rambert's own favourite cartwheels), a melting pot of moments from the company's long and many-faceted history. Bruce's choreography is so obviously informed by a slowly savoured nostalgia, aided by the haunted memory landscape of Michael Nyman's music, extracts from his *Piano* film score. For all its warmth, though, *Quicksilver* is the kind of piece that will have trouble finding a niche once the birthday party is over.

Bruce's decision to revive *Dark Elegies* shows that he is aware of Rambert's great past and that he intends to keep at least some of it alive. It was made by Antony Tudor for the company in 1937, a quiet masterpiece of miniature expressionism about grief and grieving. Set to Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* and divided into two scenes — Bereavement and Resignation — *Dark Elegies* wears its pain like a red dress in the back. And although it was choreographed almost 60 years ago in a style that



In the wardrobe of memories: Laurent Cavanha and Patricia Hines in *Quicksilver*, Christopher Bruce's tribute to Dame Marie Rambert

most dancers are now uncomfortable with (Rambert's included), it carries an eloquence that resonates to this day.

Rambert is an amazingly versatile company, thanks to Bruce, and one that shines in the up-front exhibitionism of a work such as his *Rooster*. Bruce took songs by the Rolling Stones, added lots of ironic detailing and parodic wit, and came up with a hit. The Rambert men (especially Steven Brett) looked wonderful, preening and strutting like barnyard monarchs. The women, who have seen it all before, were dynamite.

DEBRA CRANE

Journey to the centre of the heart

CONCERT

Maria-João Pires Drapers' Hall

THE Portuguese pianist Maria-João Pires was scheduled to play Chopin Nocturnes in her recital at Drapers' Hall, but with a replacement programme including both Beethoven's *Appassionata* Sonata, Op.57, and Schubert's B Flat Sonata, D.960, who could complain? Pires brought a warm, full-bodied tone and many insights to both works. There have been more impassioned interpretations of the Beethoven, but none more subtle. Under Pires's fingers, every note is carefully weighted: the tiniest pause before a significant gesture is enough to register its importance. The dotted figure heralding the last movement is usually

thundered out, but Pires delivered it introspectively, raising the curtain on a finale full of fascinating detail.

Pires's introspection makes her an ideal guide on the spiritual journey of Schubert's last sonata. The succession of harmonic sidesteps of the first movement was traversed with a sublime ease and

eloquence. These qualities carried over into the Andante, whose stillness hinted at profound emotional depths.

It is less clear whether Schubert's Impromptus call for quite the same level of self-examination. No.1 in C Minor from the D.999 set is a nobly expressive piece, but it felt overburdened with an emotional weight that deprived it of its essentially improvisatory nature. No.2 in E Flat was ideally fluent, and the third, in G Flat, found Pires in her element once again: meditative, self-communing and delivered with exquisite pianism.

BARRY MILLINGTON

BASE NOTES

THE world's most prominent amateur conductor, Gilbert Kaplan, is to open the Salzburg Festival next Saturday with a centenary performance of his entire repertoire. To mark the anniversary, Center Classics is issuing a CD-ROM package, *The Kaplan Mahler Edition*. The set includes three works by the composer, remastered by musicians who worked with Mahler, and interactive material with photographs and drawings. A full printed score of the first edition of the Second Symphony completes the package.

PATIENCE is required from David Hockney aficionados. The California-based artist's first private gallery show in London for seven years has been rescheduled. Originally due to open this October, the exhibition, at Annely Juda Fine Art, is now on course for April 1997.

A SUDDEN burst of fecundity has led to cast changes for two of the three Glyndebourne Touring Opera productions to be taken on the road in October. Susan Grillon, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Linda Kitchen, the title role in *Theodora*, have both withdrawn because they are expecting babies. Anne Dawson will now sing *Theodora* and a replacement Susanna is to be announced shortly.

FRESH from rave reviews playing Mary Tyrone in the Young Vic's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Penelope Wilton is heading for the West End. In November she will open at the Albery, playing Ranevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard*. Adrian Noble's production, co-starring Alec McCowen and premiered last year in Stratford to great acclaim, marks the first commercial RSC transfer to the West End in years.

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THE TIMES ARTS



RISING STAR

Ian Fountain, immensely tall, prodigiously talented, takes on the piano virtuoso repertoire



ON MONDAY

All change at the Garden: how Anthony Dowell will steer the Royal Ballet through closure

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale on Ibsen's most chilling tale; plus, playing with theatrical pretence

Icy hearts of winter

John Gabriel Borkman
Lytelton

Ibsen's compatriot, Edvard Munch, called *John Gabriel Borkman* "the most powerful winter landscape in Scandinavian art". After seeing Richard Eyre's brilliantly tough, bleak revival, you may think the painter's praise stingy. By the time Eileen Atkins's black-clad Gunhild stretches out a hand towards Vanessa Redgrave's black-clad Ella as snow falls onto the corpse of Paul Scofield's black-clad Borkman, you will be hard put to name an artist of any nationality who has thrust you so feelingly into the season that, as Hugo said, changes heaven's water and men's hearts into stone.

All three main characters are human wreaths obsessively haunting their own pasts. Upstairs, Scofield's former banker paces, mumbles angrily to himself, and, when Michael Bryant's underling offers an ear, boasts of how he will revive the glistering career that ended with his imprisonment for fraud. Downstairs, Atkins's Gunhild broods and plots, a weird, silvery glint in her eyes. They are husband and wife, but have not spoken for a decade.

Redgrave's Ella is her twin and, you might think, a healthy catalyst. But though she seems warmer, she has her spooky side too. She once loved Borkman, he loved her, and she has not forgiven him for trading that love for advancement at work. Moreover, she has claimy emotional designs on the Borkmans' son, Oliver Milburn's Erhart, as have his parents. His mother believes the boy has a mission to restore the family's name, and his father madly suggests they go into business together.

Ibsen spent his career defending the right of the individual to resist the demands of others; and he was certainly not going to change his mind at the age of 68, when he wrote *Borkman*. With the help of the mistress, formidably played by Felicity Dean, Erhart duly makes an exit as life-saving as Nora's from her doll's house. But this time Ibsen takes a lot more interest in the oppressors than in their victim:

Demonic lust for "power over power itself": Paul Scofield as John Gabriel Borkman

which is fine, because at the National all three make a memorable, even indelible impression.

Redgrave is emotionally a bit self-effacing at first, but that only adds power to the passage in which she accuses Borkman of murdering her soul and his own, lines she fills with fierce distress. Atkins never softens what is bitter in Gunhild, at one climax transforming herself into a cross between a Grimm hag and

Medea: which is appropriate, for the play is more mythic and Greek than naturalistically Norwegian. But somewhere within the witch is a woman who, faced with the prospect of losing her son, sags in pain to the floor amid the brown furniture and thin light of Anthony Ward's austere drawing room.

And Scofield? Well, he is a less dreamy Borkman than Ralph Richardson in Peter Hall's 1975 revival, but he is

far more formidable. You believe his claim to want "power over power itself", meaning power to move as well as mine mountains. He might be a mix of Faust, Prometheus, Napoleon on Elba and Milton's Lucifer, given the passionate intensity with which he talks of industrial conquest and the rasping brutality with which he dismisses lesser mortals. A terrific performance, not to be missed.

Vernacular history lesson

work — but too quirky and original to ignore, and Trinity College of Music has put in its debt with a production at Spitalfields this week. Trinity is showing enterprise by honouring Thomson's centenary with a mini-festival. *Mother* is being staged alongside the same composer's *Four Saints in Three Acts*.

The two operas were the fruit of long collaboration between the composer — and critic — and Gertrude Stein. Both appear in *Mother* as narrators, but the central character is the suffragette Susan B. Anthony. Her long

life (1820-1906) enabled Thomson and Stein to weave around her a rich tapestry of 19th-century figures, from Ulysses S. Grant to Lillian Russell. All the incidents provide a backdrop to Susan's winning of rights for women, and witty high spirits are tinged with poignancy as the heroine realises that, like men, even

women misunderstand her cause.

Thomson's music is nostalgic but never sentimental. Lyrical, arching lines and spiky tunes evoke hymns, cocky marches and parlour music, somehow catching the rhythms of American speech: it is a unique work. Thomson's scoring is flexible, and Trinity used a small band including strings, piano, harmonium, percussion, and too-dominant trumpet. But Nicholas Kok got the other balances right in the barn-like Spitalfields Market Opera, and conducted a performance of charm and zest.

Mother was premiered in 1946 at Columbia University, and works well with young singers. Soprano Michelle Wright was a charismatic Susan, with clear words that most of the cast matched. The most "finished" voice was Sandra Heymann's, who revealed a gleaming edge in the high mezzo role of Constance Fletcher. In a cast of more than 20, the standard was uniformly good, but Edel O'Brien, Melanie Reid, Christopher Butterworth, Justin Brown, Stephen Bowen and Alda Ingibergsdottir stood out. Emma Jenkins's production caught the opera's kaleidoscopic character.

JOHN ALLISON

Giving it all they've got

John's Maids
Wimbledon Studio
Anoraknophobia
Old Red Lion

In each of these plays one obsessive character, hooked on drama, forces the other two to tear down the boundary between the real and the pretence. In the play with the long name, by Michael Norman, the fairly deranged Issy expects a retired television actor, famous for playing a John Steed-like character in something called *The Watchers*, to be as sexy as her fantasies require. In the other play a bald, gay dramatist, modelled upon Genet, directs two actresses until they are able to satisfy his need for a murderously extreme climax.

John's Maids was first seen at Leatherhead's Thorndike Studio, where it was devised by the company, Thorndike Exchange, and subsequently written, and directed, by Beth Wood. It is a fascinating work, created by a group of people presumably obsessed (in the nicest possible way) with the potential power when we dare to feel an emotion to the limit of our being.

Through the curtains come two actresses, auditioning for John's new and not yet finished play. As is the nature of works of this sort, he needs to discover what they are capable of in order to write the last scenes, and Andrew Pullen's bullish, chain-smoking dictator forces them to touch, dominate, submit to each other, play truth games and finally move into their roles as sisters (maids rather than Genet's maid-servants) and sweep him to the savage climax.

At first Susanna Klemm's baby-doll blonde supposes she should be sweetly alluring, where Samantha Best's older woman chooses to be aloof. All three are fine performers, and it is exciting to see the subtle details that apply to mark their characters' alteration. Klemm's becoming truculent, Best revealing sensuality within the glacial.

What this subtlety means is that they become intensely vivid creatures. We must assume that John has chosen them because their body language tells him he will find in their pasts the childhood abuse and lesbian love he wants for his play. But as his intuitions are confirmed, Best and Klemm become channels through which their own pasts and John's creations flow together. Congratulations to all

involved, including Simon Lamb for an apt and multi-coloured lighting design.

Coming to *Anoraknophobia* after this makes the fact/fiction wobble encouraged by the media — eg. "Tom Hulse IS Mozart" — seem a more trivial concern. Norman does not manage his exits and entrances well, and Dawn Liner's production cannot disguise this. He also leaves gaps in the lives of his odd characters which the information he does give us cannot bridge. But I liked Geoffrey Swann's absurdly posturing "Guy Champion" in his yellow flares and Louis Quatorze cane, squinting into a mirror to smooth a wrinkle. Death lurks in this play too, though not in the way you expect.

JEREMY KINGSTON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

IAN FOUNTAIN

Age: 26

Profession: Concert pianist. Praised for his expressive range and formidable technique.

How to spot him: He must be 6ft 5in, but he has stopped measuring.

Where to catch him: On Monday he is playing Rachmaninov in Chichester Cathedral as part of the city's summer festivities. Next year, he returns to Israel where, at 19, he was the youngest-ever winner of the Arthur Schnitger Piano Masters Competition. Meanwhile he is recording Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*.

On the *Diabelli Variations*: "As a debut," says Fountain, "it is jumping in at the deep end, an encyclopaedia of musical styles from farce to religious profundity."

Background in music: His mother is a piano teacher. He first tinkled at the age of four, but it was not until he was 15 that he was suddenly consumed by the piano.

Passions: "I want to do more Bach," he says. "He is the hardest of all composers because he demands that element of simplicity that is so hard to achieve."

Any regrets? "Many of my favourite composers — Wagner, Bruckner, Mahler — did not write for the piano. Maybe I should take up conducting."

Surprise finales: In Israel, during Prokofiev's Eighth Sonata, a bird shot in and nearly took off his glasses. In Spain last month, the audience mistook a pause for the big finish. Fountain plugged on amid cries of "bravo".

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Now that the Princess of Wales has secured her future, Sarah Bradford argues that she could find a new role as saviour of the NHS

Divorced, but not detached

Some years ago I interviewed one of the wisest royal advisers. Those girls [by which he meant the Princess of Wales and the Duchess of York] are going to cost the Queen a lot of money," he predicted. While Her Majesty seems to have escaped relatively lightly as the divorce from her second son of the "yellow canary" (as the Princess's lawyers apparently called the Duchess of York) is concerned, the Princess of Wales is by all accounts to receive what in terms of British divorce settlements is a very large sum indeed.

On the surface, the Princess seems to have emerged triumphant from the poker game which has been played between the Waleses' respective lawyers, with a large lump sum, her apartment at Kensington Palace, generous expenses for her private office and shared control over the future of her sons. That she has done so is not merely due to the obvious desire of the Prince to be rid of his (to him) troublesome wife and of the Queen to end the war between the couple which was doing so much damage to the monarchy, but also to the position Diana has built up for

herself and the skill with which she has played the endgame.

I can think of no one else who has successfully dared to take on the Palace as she has. The threat "she won't go quietly" made in the *Panorama* interview, which prompted the Queen to order the couple to divorce, was a powerful opening gambit.

The situation is, of course, in many ways unique in the history of the British monarchy. Neither the unfortunate wives of Henry VIII nor Caroline of Brunswick (who died before her husband, George IV, could divorce her) received generous treatment. But none of these royal ladies were as the Princess is, mothers to a future King. The financial settlement awarded to the Duke of Windsor in return for the throne was far less ample and more akin to the "drip-feed" payments which the Prince of Wales apparently favoured.

Only in one sense does she seem to have lost out. From the date of

the divorce, she will no longer be entitled to call herself HRH — a title which hitherto has been regarded as signifying membership of the inner circle of the Royal Family. There is an echo here of the controversy over the withholding of the title from the Duchess of Windsor, which was widely seen as unfair. George VI's public stance was that the refusal of the Dominions and the British Government to countenance the Duchess as Queen had signified that they would not accept her as a member of the Royal Family — hence the Abdication. Privately, many people at the time thought that the Windsor marriage would not last and that "you couldn't have divorced HRHs galivanting around the world". This may well have influenced the Queen's thinking in stripping both royal divorces of their HRH. Nonetheless, the Palace statement stressed "the Princess of Wales, as the mother of Prince William, will be regarded by the Queen and the

Prince of Wales as being a member of the Royal Family". Whatever she may think privately of the Princess, the Queen accepts that her status as mother of Prince William has to be recognised. Incidentally, the idea of the Princess curtsying to her sons, as strict etiquette demands, is laughable — in fact one cannot imagine her curtsying to any of her former in-laws except the Queen and the Queen Mother.

So what does the future hold for Diana, Princess of Wales, divorced but still living cheek by jowl with her former in-laws at Kensington Palace? Buckingham Palace is still exercised about a role for the Princess of Wales, who will probably remain as much of a thorn in the courtiers' sides as she ever was. Her huge popularity will ensure her a continuation of the kid-glove treatment, and any perceived injustice would result in the worst possible publicity. (On my recent promotional tour of the US

and Canada for my biography of the Queen, I was frequently asked "Why is the Queen so mean to Di?" It was an uphill struggle to convince people that she wasn't).

It seems certain that the Princess will not get the roving ambassador role which she envisaged for herself, in the face of silent howls of protest from Whitehall. Curiously, the Duke of Windsor wanted exactly the same thing and did not get it because of Foreign Office opposition. The Princess is streetwise but not wise in the tortuous paths of diplomacy, as her visit to her friends Imran Khan and his wife Jemima, née Goldsmith, in Pakistan showed.

Her future role is likely to be as the "Queen of Hearts" she claimed she wanted to be. It is doubtful whether she has the intellectual stamina and self-discipline for the kind of international presidency that the Princess Royal has deployed so notably. It hardly fits with the lunches at San Lorenzo,

the hours spent on the cultivation of her body. She is a star — and the function of a star is to shine. As a fundraiser she is unequalled, as her recent trip to Chicago demonstrated. She has an undoubted vocation for comforting the poor and the sick (even when it seems to verge on voyeurism, as in the famous case of the heart surgery). Both these qualities can and should be utilised for the public good.

One of the most interesting books to have been written recently on the monarchy has highlighted the crucial role which it played in leading on the welfare front before the advent of the Welfare State — Edward VII and the King's Fund being a notable example. Hospitals were built and charities set up on the proceeds of royal fundraising. Now the Welfare State is leaking at every seam: the NHS in particular could not survive, much less develop, without private funding of wards and new technology. Who better than Diana to play a leading

part in this development?

On a less happy note, the consequences of this momentous divorce could be profound. If and when King William V ascends the British throne, he will be the first monarch in modern history to come from a "broken home". Who knows what scars the very public war between his parents has inflicted on a boy at his most sensitive and vulnerable age? Hitherto Prince William has shown real class and character in public. But will the failure of his parents' marriage affect his own attitude when he is of an age to marry?

Recent heirs to the throne — the Duke of Windsor and Prince Charles — have shown an extreme reluctance to commit themselves to marriage, because of the formidable pressures on their prospective partners and, importantly, because any marriage involving the royal succession would have to be for life. The Waleses' divorce has broken this taboo, and its consequences for the style of a future monarchy are hard to predict.

Sarah Bradford is the author of *Elizabeth: A Biography of Her Majesty the Queen* (Heinemann).

Why Latin is ripe for revival

Peter Jones on reversing the decline and fall of classics in state schools

The story of the demise of Latin (and, in its train, Greek) is all too well known. The decision by Oxford and Cambridge universities in May 1960 to abandon O-level Latin as an entrance qualification started the downhill slide, and the national curriculum, which does not include the ancient languages, helped it on its way. The newly compulsory GCSE technology, putting further strain on timetables and budgets, will surely wave Latin and Greek once and for all over the cliff.

Yet, at this blackest hour, Nicholas Tate, the chief executive of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, is raising serious questions about the nature of contemporary British education, and inviting head teachers to reconsider the part our historical culture has to play. The impact of the classical world on the West has in this respect never been in doubt.

If the national curriculum is hostile to the ancient languages, at least the study of Greek culture is compulsory at key stage 2 (ages 7-11), while the Romans are a popular option at key stage 3 (ages 11-14).

The great grammar debate begun by the Education Secretary Gillian Shephard's insistence that children "need to be taught how English works" is focusing attention on the structure of the English language with a new intensity. One does not learn Latin merely to learn grammar, but there is no denying the spin-off.

The long-term consequences of primary school interest are especially important. Oxford and Cambridge's demand that all their undergraduates should know Latin was combined with a widespread assumption that classics was an "elitist" subject to create a tremendous prejudice against Latin, as if it were all somehow the subject's fault.

Meanwhile, educators who developed a blind spot to classics in the 1950s are at last reaching the end of their careers. Few of them, for example, teach at grant-maintained schools, which have shown a marked interest in starting up Latin again. The accusation has been made that this is simply educational snobbery. That is not my experience but, if so, it is a considerable improvement on its traditional alternative: destructive, knee-jerk philistinism.

Classicists have played their part

with vision and imagination. The Oxbridge decision triggered a complete rethink of linguistic priorities. Pupils learning Latin these days get on to the real thing far more quickly and agreeably than ever they used to. Summer schools and adult education courses in Latin and Greek flourish. Even Oxford (like provincial universities for many years) will now take classical undergraduates with only a GCSE in one of the languages. Courses on classics in translation in schools and universities have made the ancient world accessible in a way that was not the case 40 years ago. Think of the success of Penguin and World's Classics.

So we sniff change in the air, a new receptivity to the ancient world. But if it is time for schools to respond, they already groan under massive burdens. At the same time, devolution of budgets to schools (in principle excellent) leaves little room for local education authorities to exercise overall responsibility for the provision of smaller subjects on some sort of shared area basis, even if they want to. Music, for example, suffers badly here.

Yet the cost of laying on four periods a week of Latin in schools that had not already been pared to the bone would be trivial — about £2,500 a year. The fundraising charity Friends of Classics (which I help to run) cannot, unfortunately, pitch at that level yet, but we can respond to requests for help in buying books for new classical courses. It is gratifying how much good £250 achieves in a cash-strapped school.

Do the sums. £1 million might, with cunning, yield £100,000 a year and, pump-prime, 50 targeted schools across the country. £5 million could target 250 schools. What one is looking for, then, is some means by which sums can be raised and targeted nationwide.

The tragedy is that one can wish in vain for this Government, or the next, to take the slightest interest in an educational enterprise that has important consequences for our cultural life. It would, at minimal cost, bring back to our schools that richness, variety and choice about which they bleat so incessantly, to such little effect.

The author lectures in classics at Newcastle University.

A night at the Opera House

Covent Garden's new *Traviata* is superb — but why should you, the taxpayer, have to pay for my pleasure?

The mean of spirit may avoid London's Covent Garden on Monday evening. The true romantic will cast cynicism aside and race to the piazza, to witness a rare moment in opera history. The son of a Sicilian bricklayer, Roberto Alagna, and the daughter of a Romanian train driver, Angela Gheorghiu, will broadcast their love for each other across Covent Garden piazza, through the voice of Verdi's *La Traviata* direct from the adjacent Opera House stage. I was present at the first performance inside the House on Monday. It is an experience without equal.

Traviata offers a woman a platform like no other opera. When Giulini first conducted Callas in 1955, he described the moment when he raised his eyes from the podium and first caught sight of her on stage. He could hardly raise his baton. "I was overwhelmed by beauty," he recalled. "The illusion of art vanished. Behind me the audience, auditorium, all of La Scala, seemed artifice. Only what transpired on stage was truth, life itself."

Traviata ranks as the most intense, personal, introverted work of art. It is a man's window on a woman's soul. Violetta is Verdi's Anna Karenina. Her path from self-indulgence to salvation through love, and on to self-denial, redemption and death is a Pilgrim's Progress, a journey of Everywoman. Familiarity dare not breed contempt. This is art as proxy for life.

When the curtain rose on Angela Gheorghiu on Monday, I felt a similar sensation to Giulini's. She has an astonishing beauty. The slight frown on her brow as she sings recalled Ileana Cotrubas in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* (though a gentleman should never compare). She has the most delicate protrusion of the upper lip as she sings. I gather, Sir James Goldsmith has showered her with roses. He is a man of taste. Alagna/Alfredo's infatuation, in life as in art, is plausible.

Gheorghiu and Alagna may, or may not yet, be technically unsurpassed in these roles. Most critics on Monday were ecstatic: "a natural bond of devotion" (*Telegraph*), "a *Traviata* to die for" (*FT*), "musical and dramatic finesse" (*Times*). Gheorghiu's ability to move from present joy to impending tragedy was emotionally overwhelming. There were no familiar tricks, such as whispering the final consumptive arias. Her vulnerability to life's

misfortune was wholly convincing. Alagna's voice was no less rich, a strong tenor buttress to her lofty soprano. Opera house audiences normally applaud the set-piece arias. Gheorghiu's glorious notes were left trailing into the rafters in total silence. Such was her spell that no one stirred a limb until the evening was complete.

Both Gheorghiu and Alagna present references to Callas and Pavarotti. Alagna dons a Pavarotti mask when described as "the fourth tenor". Gheorghiu asks interviewers, why must you always compare? Every *Traviata* should be its own love story, its own tragedy. Dumas's autobiographical experience of the whore with the heart of gold, *La Dame aux camélias*, has long been a dramatic cliché, repeated on stage, in ballet and film. What gives Verdi's version its power is in offering the singer scope to tell the story afresh with each performance.

The men are comparatively wooden. Alfredo, the infatuated admirer, kindles in Violetta a fresh understanding of love, at which she smashes with the gift of a camellia. His father, Germont, pleads with her to leave his son alone, desperate to protect the family's reputation and the marriage of Alfredo's sister. I have never seen Germont as the ogre of operatic legend. He embodies a parent's anguish on having to choose between the happiness of one or other of his children. To beseech a fallen woman (*traviata*) to break the spell she has cast over his son in favour of his daughter is not unreasonable.

Verdi's music is sympathetic to Germont. It allows him pain as he realises that he is asking an angel to surrender what she most treasures. She yearns to be his daughter, and when later in the opera he accepts her, it is almost more than we can bear. After hearing Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau sing Germont, I could never view him as a monster. His confusion lies at the heart of this opera. Covent Garden was inspired to cast Thomas Allen as Germont, a monster in nobody's book.

As Violetta approaches death, we know the denouement. Yet the singer's genius is to suspend our belief in it, to dispel the premoni-



Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna as Violetta and Alfredo

tion. Alfredo's love will save her. Perhaps the masked revellers are not the dancers of death. Perhaps the physics will work. Verdi has Violetta surging to life just when we think all is lost. She leaps from her bed and hurls herself round the room. Her virtue is to be rewarded and art will prove no illusion. Gheorghiu carries our suspense to the end. Her death is a horrific shock.

Opera is the one art that can move even the most sophisticated to tears. In the case of Gheorghiu and

that few great artists have been able to withstand. Nobody in the audience can miss the force in Violetta's desperate aria seeking reassurance.

As circumstance forces them apart and subjects their love to a devastating test: "Amami, Alfredo." Let this not be another diva pushed up only to be crushed by fame, left not another Callas.

I left Covent Garden feeling doubly privileged. My three hours inside were not just a supreme pleasure, they were subsidised by the taxpayer to the tune of some £100 above the ticket price. The mind inevitably wanders to a justification for this bounty. Hundreds have been clamouring for tickets to this production. Why should not the market rather than the taxpayer bear the price? It could clearly afford it. Covent Garden claims that tickets would then become obscenely expensive. But opera is obscenely costly. Why should the taxpayer sustain a covert obscenity merely to avert an overt one?

There are a dozen answers to this question. Sir Peter Hall used to say that subsidies to excellence "trickle down" to improve standards in less exalted ranks. Quality for the few inspires quality in the many — though I cannot see how pleasure in the few inspires pleasure in the many. A great opera house adds to the prestige of the nation. Surely Britain cannot turn its back on artists of the highest quality.

These arguments are like Marie Antoinette defending her menu against the mob. To be frank, I find it hard to justify subsidising the pleasures of the already rich. Grand opera is increasingly popular entertainment, capable of filling commercial stadiums and arenas. The three tenors perform without public support. Why should I be paid so much to enjoy the fourth?

Covent Garden best justifies its subsidy by one criterion: wider access. That access can never be within the walls of one auditorium. It must be electronic. On Monday and Thursday of next week, Gheorghiu and Alagna will be heard free by all who can pack into the piazza outside. It should be there every night, and in piazzas across the nation. I cannot see why it should not be readily available to cable television and Classic FM. That is true access.

I assume Covent Garden will not dare reply that wider access is forbidden by its trade unions. If so, we can only await a popular revolution. A new regime is imminent at the Opera House. As Alfredo would say, roll on "Un di felice".

Banging on

TWO GUNS which Lord Halifax, the former Viceroy of India, used on a shooting expedition with Adolf Hitler are to be sold at auction. Halifax's son, Lord Holderness, is auctioning the pair of Purdeys at Christie's this autumn.

The shotguns, estimated at more than £30,000, were made for Lord Halifax after he had been appointed Viceroy in 1925. "He always travelled with them and he took them when he was invited to go shooting in Germany with Hitler,"

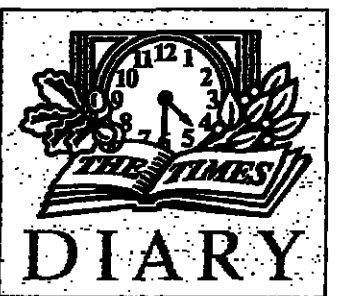


Adolf Hitler and Lord Halifax

Goering and Goebbels in 1937," explains Lady Holderness. "They all went fox-shooting together. My father-in-law thought this very odd. He was a Master of Foxhounds."

Halifax reported later that Reichsmarschall Goering, who during the shoot sported brown breeches, a leather jerkin and a green hat topped by an enormous chamois tuft, was a good egg. "His personality... was frankly attractive, like a great schoolboy... a composite personality — film star, great landowner interested in his estate, Prime Minister, party manager, head gamekeeper at Chatsworth."

Andrew Roberts, Halifax's biographer, tells me that the "Holy Fox" was a good shot. And this was despite his withered left hand on which he always wore a black glove. He did, however, experience difficulties with his Purdeys: he lent one to a friend who was using it when a barrel burst. "It was shipped back to Purdeys in great secrecy because it was so embarrassing," says Lady Holderness. Then, while her husband was carrying one of them, he fell and the stock smashed. As a favour to Lord Holderness, who lost both legs at El Alamein, the company



repaired it in four days as opposed to the usual six months, in time for him to go shooting as arranged with Lord Cowdray.

In the frame

RUMOURS of an upsurge in presidential philandering can be firmly squashed by the romantic, marital model Bill Clinton set at the recent G7 summit in Lyons. He was having dinner in a restaurant with the Russian Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, when he had to disappear off to the loo. En route, however, he was arrested by a watercolour by the French artist Jeanine Journeau-Morel.

The picture depicted the medieval town of Perouges that he and Hillary had visited during the conference. Whipping out a credit card, he said: "Ah! I take it. Ah want to give it to Hillary." Though

excited about the £200 sale, Ms Journeau-Morel said: "No one thought to show it to any other heads of state."

Cannabis cheer

WOODY HARRELSON, the surprisingly short star of *Natural Born Killers* and the television show *Cheers*, is planning to invest in Britain's hemp fields. Ten thousand acres of sweet-smelling hemp, the natural fibre produced by the cannabis plant, are now cultivated



"Hi, Tony. I'm looking for a job..."

in secret locations across Britain, all carefully monitored by the Home Office to make sure the plants are drug-free.

Harrelson's interest in British hemp was sparked when a group from Hemcore, an Essex-based company, went on a promotional tour to America. They were greeted by Harrelson, kitted out in hemp clothing from head to toe.

In debauche circles, they are tearing their taffeta in anguish at news of the Princess of Wales's divorce. Consolation comes in the many shape of the Duke of Kent, who will be the first Royal for years to receive the girls at the Queen Charlotte's Ball at the Grosvenor House Hotel this autumn.

Honoured

WHILE Nelson Mandela enjoyed a very public ceremony at Buckingham Palace this week, where he was showered with honorary degrees of all descriptions, Baroness Thatcher enjoyed a rather more muted affair.

On Monday, in conditions of near secrecy in the House of Lords, she was awarded an honorary degree from Brunel University. Thatcher has always resented the manner in which dons at Oxford so publicly refused to award her an honorary doctorate — "Brunel



New face at Garrard: Sally Burton, a girl who knows her rocks

doesn't quite have the same ring. A spokesman for the university says the ceremony was held away from the campus because of the terrorist threat. But angry lecturers were likely to prove just as terrifying.

Just ask Sally

GARRARD the crown jewellers, which supplied the Princess of Wales with her £28,500 sapphire and diamond engagement ring, is taking sensible precautions in the light of the Royal divorce. Should Diana choose to sell back the bauble, all press inquiries will be directed to a newly-appointed PR executive: Sally Burton, widow of

Richard and a girl who knows a thing or two about diamonds.

Yesterday, Sally was reluctant to discuss her appointment. "I have not started the job yet but I have been a regular customer."

Gordon Brown was unashamedly New Labour as host of the party's £500-a-head fundraising dinner on Thursday, where Cantona's soccer shirt was auctioned for £17,500 and Jeremy Irons paid £9,000 for a signed copy of Nelson Mandela's memoirs. "The best thing about champagne socialism," said the Shadow Chancellor, "is the champagne."



PROMISES TO KEEP

How Bosnian hopes of peace can be preserved

The seizure of the UN-protected "safe area" of Srebrenica a year ago was accompanied by crimes appalling even by the standards of Balkan conflict. Under the noses of impotent Dutch peacekeepers, the Bosnian Serbs not only put to flight 30,000 women, children and old people, but rounded up at least 6,000 of their unarmed menfolk. These men, and another 2,000 reported missing, were never seen again. All evidence points to their massacre, over a period of weeks, by Bosnian Serb forces commanded by Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, and General Ratko Mladic, who personally led the assault.

The precise numbers of the dead are still not established; Nato has stood by while Bosnian Serbs obstructed international efforts to establish the truth. Teams are only now exhuming skeletons from the mass graves revealed by satellite photographs as long ago as last August. Dr Karadzic and General Mladic, indicted on charges of genocide and war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal at The Hague, are still at liberty and in power, because Nato fears to arrest them. The refugee survivors of Srebrenica are still clustered in miserable conditions in nearby Tuzla.

These facts cast long shadows over claims that peace can be made to hold in Bosnia. Srebrenica fell not because the West was powerless to prevent it, but because of bickering between the United Nations and Nato commands, and within Nato itself.

In the shame of the Srebrenica aftermath, the West finally mustered the will to confront the Bosnian Serbs and silence the guns. Nato's sustained aerial bombardment of Bosnian Serb military assets, backed by American diplomatic pressure, produced the Dayton peace agreement. Out went the UN Protection Force. In came Ifor, the heavily-armed Nato-led force of 60,000 men charged with enforcing compliance with Dayton's military provisions. In came a team led by Carl Bildt to oversee its civilian aspects, including a \$5 billion reconstruction programme, the restoration of civilian movement and free elections.

Now, a year after the Srebrenica crisis brought them together, Western governments are again dissipating resolve in bickering which puts the entire Dayton process in doubt. This week's meeting in London of the five-power Contact Group

was the most fractious since the bitter transatlantic rows of 1994.

The strictly military side of the operation has run broadly to schedule. Although the occasional Serb tank makes an illegal appearance, most roadblocks have gone. Ordinary civilians, whose security Nato declines to assure, still, however, cannot move freely between zones or return to the homes from which they were driven. Physical reconstruction is under way, although Bosnia is still a place of gutted towns and factories, mined roads and fields.

But the absence of hostilities is deceptive and likely to be temporary unless the more ambitious task of peace-building makes real progress. Politically, the picture is bleak with intolerance, suspicion, double-dealing and the rise of one-party regimes in Sarajevo as well as Pale. American pressure holds the Muslim-Croat Federation together by the slenderest of threads — just how slender is evidenced in Mostar, where the Croats are refusing to accept the results of the June elections organised under EU auspices.

The Mostar vote was seen as a dry run for full Bosnian elections on September 14. Warren Christopher insists that these must go ahead as planned, arguing that they are a vital step to a "unified Bosnian state". That might be the case if the peace-hungry majority were able to vote without intimidation for a federal form of co-existence. But ultra-nationalists control parts of the Muslim-Croat federation; so long as Dr Karadzic is at liberty, a free vote in Republika Srpska is inconceivable.

If the West is serious about keeping to the Dayton timetable, it must quickly do four things. Nato patrols must fan out to prevent abuses by civil authorities of their powers, including bans on the right of free assembly. Carl Bildt should use his power to reimpose sanctions on any party that defies the explicit Dayton demand to surrender indicted war criminals for trial. Britain and France, who have blocked fresh orders to Ifor to arrest Messrs Karadzic and Mladic, should summon up some courage. President Clinton, finally, should heed the wise advice of William Perry, his defence secretary, and give ordinary Bosnians the assurance they most need, which is that Ifor will stay long enough for peace to take secure hold. The end of fighting is a great accomplishment. It must not be risked by lack of resolution now.

NEW LABOUR, OLD OUTLOOK

More women ministers beats a Minister for Women

Tony Blair is shortly to announce a further fine adjustment of Labour's policy for women. During the Kinnock era the party supported the idea of a ministerial department devoted to women's issues. Mr Blair began backing away from that some time ago. New proposals favour a Minister located in the Cabinet Office who would have a broad remit across Whitehall to emphasise questions of particular concern to women. This portfolio would have Cabinet status and a parliamentary question time.

This is a better policy than the previous approach. A separate Ministry for Women would almost certainly have been squeezed within the bureaucratic power structure. It also risked implying that any issue that did not fall under its scope did not affect women — an absurd scenario. There are clearly matters of concern which have a disproportionate, although not exclusive, importance to women and where better co-ordination across departments would be valuable.

It is unlikely, however, that the particular plan being offered by Labour would match the objectives that it has set. The past record of free-ranging ministers with open-ended responsibilities is not encouraging. For different reasons, Churchill experimented with sets of super-ministers or overlords in the 1950s and Wilson invented a Department of Economic Affairs in the 1960s — both without much success. Under Mr Major the Office of Public Service/Citizens Charter has not improved the record.

Furthermore, the attitude that lies behind this initiative is out of date. Few enterprising young women today see improved prospects from arming a politician with a title. Such faith in government might have been credible at the time of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 but is hard to hold now. Similarly, the commitment to a gender-based quota of representatives in Labour's plans for a Scottish Parliament reflects an idea whose hour has largely passed. Although European experience varies, the Scandinavian pioneers of this approach are largely retreating from it. A generation gap exists. Labour risks failing to see it.

Labour should instead be playing to its strengths. The party now has a much deeper pool of talent than the Conservatives among female members of the House of Commons. If there were a Blair Cabinet it would in all probability contain at least six female members. The present 39 women Labour MPs include an extremely strong intake from the 1992 election. There would have been a large increase in numbers after the next election even without all-women shortlists. Conservatives already appreciate that the contrast in the sex-balance between the two parties after the polls will reflect badly on them.

The better way to advance greater appreciation of the issues that Labour is trying to address is available already. More women ministers are likely to prove more effective than a Minister for Women.

FAREWELL MANDELA

Thanks to the man who leaves his message behind him

Yesterday Nelson Mandela stepped out at the window of the South African High Commission, the building that had, for so long, been the focus of British campaigners against apartheid. Church bells rang, the crowd wept and cheered, as the President, upright, frail, dignified, thanked them for their support during his 27 years of imprisonment. Mr Mandela's state visit has moved the nation as few others ever have.

Modestly, he insisted that Britain's welcome had not been stimulated by one man, but was a salute to all South Africa. He was wrong. This was a personal achievement. Nelson Mandela was feted not just for what he had won for his country, but what he had shown of the human spirit. When, inevitably, historians argue over the role of personalities in shaping post-apartheid South Africa, they will be forced to concede an enormous role for his first black President.

But that was not what drew Londoners to him this past week. They jostled to touch him as crowds touched holy men centuries ago. They came to see for themselves what has come through so strikingly on television: his spontaneous warmth, his absence of rancour and his emotion at returning to the land that in 1962 he visited only in secret.

One image, especially, will remain in the minds of politicians and those who have taken Mr Mandela's country into their hearts: the sight of the 78-year-old leader grasping the hand of Betty Boothroyd as the pair descended the steps into Westminster Hall. Protocol, as it should, gave way to his human needs and the poignancy of the moment. A state visit is invariably trammeled by tradition; Mr Mandela no more let it confine him than the bars that held him in Robben Island. The famous shirts, the spontaneous gestures, the dawn timetable: all were unusual departures from the pattern, and the Queen seemed as delighted as all those who saw them.

Mr Mandela takes home with him much needed promises of investment. He leaves much behind. His visit to Brixton, above all, brought to Britain something of the reconciliation and hope that he has given his own country. The last time the world's cameras focused on this run-down south London suburb was after riots that exacerbated racial tensions and profoundly depressed the black community. This time the cameras were there to record a burst of civic and ethnic pride, with lasting lessons for the rest of the country. For that and for his visit, Britain expresses heartfelt thanks.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Orange Order and Ulster disorder

From Dr T. S. Callaghan

Sir, The confrontation this week between the members of the majority community in Northern Ireland and the police, supported by the military (leading article, July 10; letters, July 11), was bound to happen. The so-called "peace process", initially welcomed by all, is now indistinguishable from appeasement.

The majority community, who have suffered so much over the past 25 years, can see clearly what is happening. The politicians who attempt to deal even-handedly with terrorist representatives and decent people have only themselves to blame when the people of the majority community in Northern Ireland turn away from them in revulsion.

Yours sincerely,
T. S. CALLAGHAN,
The Mary Acre, Brechin, Angus.
July 11.

From Mr John Smart

Sir, It is to be regretted that the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary explained his decision to permit the banned Orange Order march in Portadown by saying that he was afraid that a refusal might have led to violence and perhaps death (report, July 12).

Hitherto the clear message to extremists in the Province has been that violence or the threat of violence would not yield results.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN SMART,
22 Eatonville Road, SW17.
July 12.

From Mr John Marley

Sir, As one of the silent majority of Northern Irish people who wish to see a just peace, I cannot begin to convey the disappointment I feel at the concessions given to the Orange Order.

Politicians on all sides speak of peace and progress, but today's events lead me to question how genuine these sentiments are in the face of a Government that seems to be swayed more by the chance of losing Unionist votes in Parliament than by the need for communities to find a new way to live together.

Yours truly,
JOHN MARLEY,
Flat 5, 79 Sinclair Road, W14.
July 11.

From Mr Keith Chambers

Sir, It is a salutary and indeed shaming experience to contrast the example of Nelson Mandela's desire and commitment to look to the future, forgive the past and go forward, with the backward-looking bigotry of the so-called leaders in one of our own provinces.

Yours faithfully,
KEITH CHAMBERS,
19 Hill Road,
Oakley, Basingstoke, Hampshire.
July 12.

From Mr R. F. Lee

Sir, It still seems that in Northern Ireland nothing succeeds like the threat of violence. What price decommisioning now?

Yours faithfully,
RAMON F. LEE,
57 Midhurst Hill, Bexleyheath, Kent.
July 12.

Divided loyalties

From Mr Jeremy Arnold

Sir, This week's events in Northern Ireland testify to the continuing inability of the British and Irish Governments to recognise the underlying constitutional problems. Northern Ireland is politically unviable because a large minority of its people have no sense of loyalty to the State as a political entity. A united Ireland would have a similarly disaffected minority and would be equally unstable.

The only solution to the problem is to create, in the territory of Northern Ireland, two homogeneous entities in which the two communities could feel at home with their nationality. As Simon Jenkins has so often pointed out, this process has been taking place spontaneously for some time. It is a process which we should actively promote, though it may take many years to complete.

In the meantime, however, there are already areas of the province which are overwhelmingly nationalist — Londonderry west of the Foyle, South Armagh, Newry, Strabane — and areas which are overwhelmingly Unionist. Moreover the nationalist areas tend to cluster along the Irish border, and the Unionist areas tend to lie in the North and the East. We could make an immediate start by transferring to the Republic sovereignty over those nationalist areas lying along the border and making a comparable commitment to a permanent status within the Union for those areas as strongly identified with the Unionist tradition.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY ARNOLD,
The Bunts, Cherrington,
Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire.
July 10.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Attitudes towards those who plotted against Hitler

From Mr Nicky Bird

Sir, The "unconditional surrender" demanded of the German people at the Casablanca conference certainly hindered the German resistance. It failed to distinguish between good and bad Germans (Joachim Fest's *Plotting Hitler's Death*, extracts, July 8 and 9).

When Churchill said in the House after the coup that "the highest personalities in the German Reich are murdering each other, or trying to", he was reflecting this destructive posture and his own forceful bigotry ("The Hun is always either at your throat or your feet").

"Unconditional surrender" was a rational response to the "stab in the back" myth fostered by the defeated Germans — and Hitler — after the Great War. It was reasoned that the German Army must be seen to be defeated, which precluded another armistice or compromise peace. Stauffenberg and the conspirators were further isolated because Stalin, who was confronting the bulk of the Wehrmacht, would never tolerate any negotiations with the non-communist resistance. But did we knowingly sacrifice conspirators to placate Stalin?

The disastrous BBC broadcast on July 22, 1944, in which unnamed conspirators were named, was written by Maurice Layton, of the BBC's German Service, at the request of Hugh Greene, its editor. Greene had received a tape carrying a long list of names of those believed to be implicated, from which Layton extracted the more important.

The tape had been sent by the Political Warfare Executive, Foreign Office, based at Woburn Abbey, who were responsible for the policy of broadcasts in German. Layton wrote, in a private letter in 1988, that "neither Hugh nor I could have supposed that PWE would have supplied us with a list which would get the conspirators into any trouble". But they did, and PWE must have been aware of the implications of publishing such a list.

Yours sincerely,
NICKY BIRD,
19 Hale Gardens, W3.
July 9.

From the Reverend Professor

Emeritus W. H. C. Friend, FBA

Sir, In one important respect, the suggestion that the British betrayed the anti-Hitler plotters is grotesque.

Broadcasting opera

From Sir Jeremy Isaacs

Sir, For Richard Morrison to suggest (article, Arts, July 6) that the "three unions — Bectu, Equity and the Musicians — control everything that breathes" here at the Royal Opera House is as baseless as it is irresponsible.

The suggestion, made ludicrous generally by important changes in recent years, including a new stage agreement, is particularly erroneous in regard to broadcasting. The costs he cites, of course, include television's production costs, as well as ours.

Bectu has not been a party to television discussions since changes negotiated shortly after I arrived here in 1988. With Equity representing the chorus, and the Musicians' Union the orchestra, we have admirable agreements which, economically, enable BBC Radio to broadcast 12 opera relays a season. For television, there is no such commitment from the broadcaster, and therefore no such agreement. Musicians and chorists have low basic earnings. It is reasonable that they should see some benefit from wider exploitation of their work.

We would like to pursue the sort of buy-out arrangement from television

that works for radio. But the initiative needs to come from the broadcasters. When it does, the Royal Opera House will do everything to smooth their way.

Modesty, meanwhile, forbids me mentioning when last a television channel regularly exhibited the interest Richard Morrison hankers for in the arts.

Yours sincerely,
JEREMY ISAACS
(General Director),
Royal Opera House,
Covent Garden, WC2.
July 9.

From Mr Richard Masters

Sir, Richard Morrison makes an effective plea for Covent Garden's productions of opera to appear on television every month. Even more welcome would be regular Saturday matinees of opera, as at the Metropolitan in New York, so that supporters of Covent Garden living outside London could attend more performances without having to add to excessive seat prices the punitive cost of a hotel bill for overnight accommodation.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD MASTERS,
36 Gipsy Lane,
Warminster, Wiltshire.

From Mr R. Arnheim

Sir, Once again the rebellion against Hitler by von Stauffenberg and his aristocratic friends is being presented in the most favourable light.

Where were these people during the first ten years of the Hitler regime whilst things were going well for them? Why did they only rebel when their East Prussian estates were being threatened by the advance of the Red Army?

My father was decorated for bravery in the German Army in the First World War, but he saw the Nazis for

that works for radio. But the initiative needs to come from the broadcasters. When it does, the Royal Opera House will do everything to smooth their way.

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Yours faithfully,
RICHARD MASTERS,
36 Gipsy Lane,
Warminster, Wiltshire.

Salmon stocks

From the Chairman of the

North Atlantic Salmon Fund

Sir, The inter-governmentally funded North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation recently held its annual meeting in Sweden. After years of research by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea and reports from numerous fishery biologists, several days of debate led to no agreement on a salmon quota for West Greenland.

The financial, administrative and scientific costs of this fruitless exercise must have been enormous. If only a small part of the money was spent in putting an end to interjectory salmon fisheries everywhere, the resulting benefit would be immediate.

There would then be no need to apportion the precious remaining stocks of wild salmon between the commercial and sport fisheries — an exercise which must cost annually several

times more than the total value of all remaining commercial fisheries for North Atlantic salmon.

How can Greenland be expected to stop exploiting salmon which feed in its waters when Scotland, England, Ireland and Canada continue to intercept the same stock with their coastal nets? Our organisation believes that only by paying generous compensation to the owners of netting rights can the future of the Atlantic salmon truly be secured.

It is high time that some of the international resources brought to bear on meetings of the sort held in Sweden were focused on this practical objective. If this does not happen, while governments and scientists carry on their weighty discussions the Atlantic salmon will quietly disappear.

With kind regards from Iceland,

Yours faithfully,
ORRI VIGFUSSON, Chairman,
North Atlantic Salmon Fund,
Skipholt 35, 105 Reykjavik.
July 10.

Hurricane Bertha

From the High Commissioner

for Antigua and Barbuda

Sir, Your report, "Hurricane forces sick to flee hospitals" (July 9), concerning the passage of Hurricane Bertha through the Caribbean, describes Antigua as "the hurricane capital of the world".

Antigua has in fact had two hurricanes in the last 45 years. Hurricane Hugo in 1989 and Luis in 1995. Further, Antigua did not "report damage when electricity supplies were cut on Sunday afternoon by the storm's ad-

vance gusts" as you reported. The electricity supply was deliberately disconnected by the electricity corporation — a normal precaution in a country where storms are expected.

In the event, Bertha passed 60 miles to the east of Antigua, creating heavy rainfall in only some parts of the island. This apart, weather conditions are good.

Yours sincerely,
RONALD M. SANDERS,
High Commissioner for
Antigua and Barbuda,
Antigua House, 15 Thayer Street, W1.
July 10.

From Mr Gerald Fleming

Sir, "They resisted the enemies of their people and gave their lives, so that God's law should not be extinguished."

These words from the letter to the Macabees are inscribed beside the names of the Counts Claus and Bernhard von Stauffenberg in the cemetery chapel of Schloss Lautlingen in Württemberg. They point to the final, decisive reason for the sacrifice of those men and women of the German resistance who dared to take on the system, fully aware of the enormous risks and the modest chances of success. They knew what they were staking their lives for.

Count Helmuth von Moltke, who had brought together a circle of leading members of the resistance at his castle in Kreisau, Silesia, wrote to his wife a few days prior to his execution: "I faced Freisler [the presiding judge of the People's Court] not as landowner, not as aristocrat, not as a Prussian, indeed not even as a German — no, I stood in front of him as a Christian and nothing else."

Yours sincerely,
GERALD FLEMING,
55 Golders Gardens, NW11.
July 9.

From Mr Alexander Robertson

Sir, Joachim Fest's account of the July 20 plot to assassinate Hitler includes the assertion that no list of a projected Cabinet was ever found. This is contradicted on page 527 of Albert Speer's book, *Inside the Third Reich*.

He claims that his own name was on a list of the post-conspiracy government and that only the remark "if possible", added in pencil together with a question mark, saved his life.

Yours faithfully,
A. ROBERTSON,
Tyn Rhos, Moelfre, Anglesey.
July 7.

Counting the years

From Mr Iain C. Baillie

Sir, Mr F. R. Salinger and Mr Robin Howard (letters, July 10; other letters June 27; July 2, 5) must be the first people to have been one-year-old babies on the day they were born.

They have confused numbering of completed entities (book pages) with chronology (a baby in its first year is not "one" until the end of the year; a company is 100 years old at the end of its 99th year, not the 100th).

By any sensible chronology December 31, 1999, would be the end of 2,000 years. Chronologists made a mistake and omitted a whole year.

Commonsense and logic justify welcoming the year 2000 as the beginning of the next millennium and ignoring pedantry based on error.

Yours faithfully,
IAIN C. BAILLIE,
20 Chesner Street, SW1.
July 10.

From Mr John Taylor

Sir, Your correspondents who concern themselves with the date of onset of the next millennium overlook a more practical problem.

Historical analysis in this century has found it convenient to employ terms to designate the passing decades (the Twenties, the Thirties and so on).

What are we to call the forthcoming decade? "The Zeroes" is too bland, whilst "the Noughties" is altogether too suggestive.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN TAYLOR,
Balliol College, Oxford.
July 10.

From Mr Simon Rosser

Sir, In the interests of harmony, may I offer an alternative dating system for the consideration of all warring parties.

The espousal of the neutral phrase "the year dot", much loved and used by my mother, should satisfy all concerned. The subsequent year would logically become "dot and carry one", and so on.

I hope this helps.
Yours sincerely,
SIMON ROSSER,
9 Alderbury Place,
Woodford Green, Essex.
July 10.

From Mr Sohail Rasul

Sir, Would it perhaps be possible to put all of those who are endlessly fascinated by the precise definition of the word "millennium" together in a separate (preferably locked) room on the last day of 1999 and let them get on with it, while the rest of us enjoy the party?

Yours faithfully,
SOHAIL RASUL,
58 Westbury Road,
New Malden, Surrey.
July 10.

OBITUARIES

LUIS RODRIGUEZ

Luis Rodriguez, former world welterweight boxing champion, died from kidney problems in Miami Beach, Florida, on July 8 aged 59. He was born in Cuba on June 17, 1937.

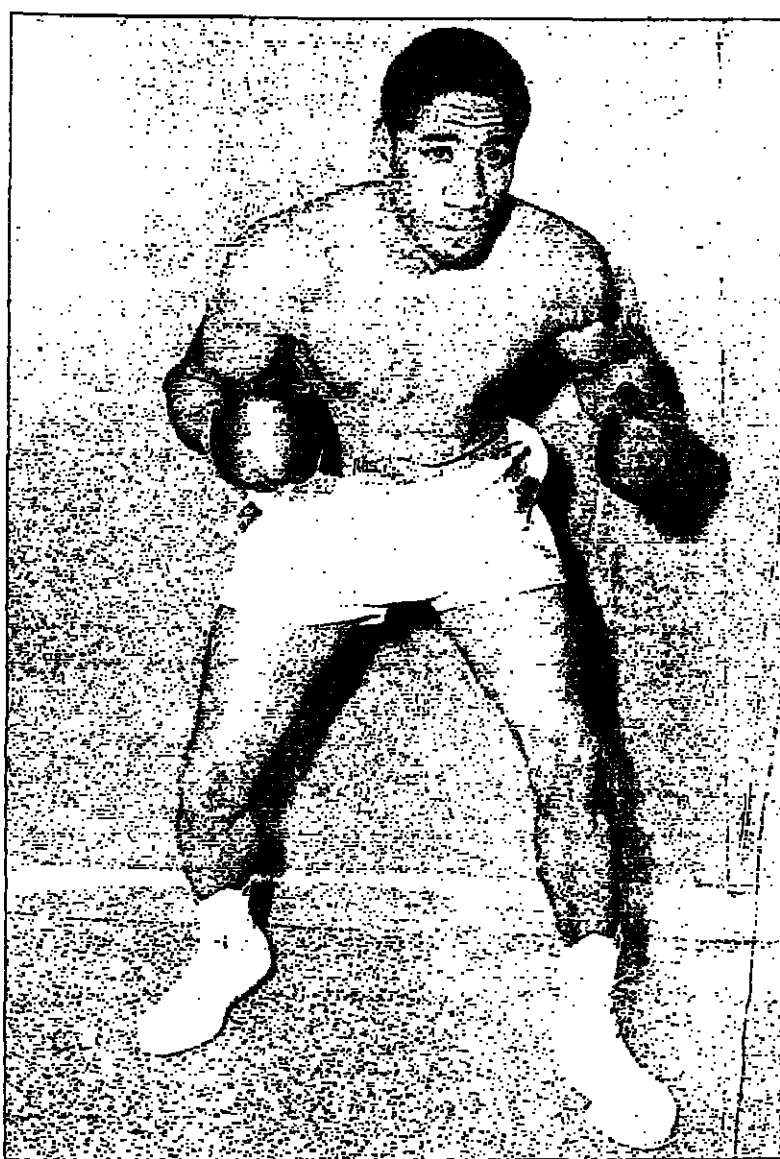
ALTHOUGH his reign as world champion was a brief one — three months in the spring and summer of 1963 — Luis Rodriguez's quality was considerably better than the unadorned recital of these facts might suggest. He had the misfortune of being fighting at welterweight in the era of the great Virgin Islander, Emile Griffith, against whom he had four desperately close bouts, three of them for the world title. When he moved up to middleweight it was to encounter the formidable Italian world champion, Nino Benvenuti.

In the event it was Griffith from whom he won the welterweight title in March 1963, a victory which was a shock to the champion and pundits alike. And when he tackled Benvenuti for the middleweight crown in Rome six years later, by then aged 32, Rodriguez swarmed all over him for ten rounds, before walking out a punch in the 11th and being knocked out.

The latter occasion was only the second time he was knocked out in a career of 120 bouts, of which he lost only nine. With his non-stop style and ferocious punching, Rodriguez generally proved too much for all but the very highest class of opponent, and he remained a top-level competitor until he retired. Though he was known as a knockout specialist, he also had marvellous boxing skills and, if he failed to secure an early K.O., he was quite capable of sustaining his painful ministrations over ten or 15 rounds, to grind out a points victory.

Luis Rodriguez was born in Camaguey, the birthplace of that other great Cuban welterweight, Kid Gavilan, who was world champion from 1950 to 1954. He started boxing as a professional in 1950 and won the Cuban welterweight title by outpointing Kid Fichique in Havana in September 1958. But after the Castro revolution of January 1959, professional boxing was banned in Cuba. Thereafter, though prowess in the ring could offer Olympic glory and the material success which attends such success in a communist state, America inevitably beckoned with its promise of glittering rewards.

Rodriguez arrived in Miami in mid-1959 in one of the early waves of the post-Castro exodus, and came under the influence of Angelo Dundee, later to be the mentor of Muhammad Ali. In a very short time Dundee had turned the Cuban into a world title contender with impressive wins over such fighters as Virgil Akins, Isaac Logart,



Garnet Hart and Jocy Giambra. In America Rodriguez reeled off a sequence of 14 straight wins, in doing so displaying the colourful fistic qualities which the American public so loves.

The first check to this triumphant progress was administered by the man who was to become his nemesis, Emile Griffith, who gained a very close points decision over him in New York in December 1960. Rodriguez did not allow this to halt his impetus. He pressed on with his career, pouncing on a succession of victories during 1961 and 1962, which contained an astonishing proportion of K.O.s. Only the Texan Curtis Cokes (later to become a world champion himself) was good enough to beat him in this period.

Griffith had become world champion in 1961 and by 1963 Rodriguez had done more than enough to earn a crack at his title. In spite of his manifest quality, the challenger was not expected

to win. Griffith's reputation was a fearsome one which (in the mind of the bloodthirsty American fight fan of those days) had acquired a dark lustre from his having previously battered another Cuban, Benny Paret, into a coma from which the latter had never recovered.

Rodriguez was not daunted. In Los Angeles on March 21, 1963, he used all his ringcraft against a tough, hard-punching opponent, and over 15 gruelling rounds won a unanimous points decision. Later the same year, in New York, Griffith gained his revenge in a split decision which many who saw the fight still feel Rodriguez won. No one else could beat Rodriguez and he saw off all other contenders to earn himself another shot at the title in June 1964. Again, it was a desperately close fight, but again the verdict was the same — a split decision verdict for Griffith.

Rodriguez carried on fighting, campaigning against top-class opposition

to try to give himself a chance for yet another crack at Griffith. The only other man who always gave him trouble was Curtis Cokes. And it was in a WBA title eliminator that the Texan inflicted on Rodriguez the first knockout of his professional career when he dropped Rodriguez in the last round.

It was three years before he was to get near a world title again. By that time he was fighting most of his bouts at middleweight, and he did enough at the higher weight to earn himself a tilt at Nino Benvenuti's world crown in Rome in November 1969. Benvenuti had a great reputation. He, too, had fought three bruising world title battles against Emile Griffith (who by that time had also gone up to middleweight), winning two of them. He had never lost in 76 fights on home soil.

Yet none of this troubled Rodriguez who sailed into his man from the opening bell and began to administer a drubbing to the Trieste that silenced the partisan Italian crowd. In the early rounds, with pulverising left jabs and slashing right hooks, he had the champion glassy-eyed. By the sixth round Benvenuti had a cut over his left eye and a deep gash on his nose. When Benvenuti came out for the 11th, palpably weak at the knees and streaming with blood, there was not a fan in the crowd who would have given anything for his chances. But after 40 seconds of the round he connected with a fast left jab to the head which Rodriguez simply did not see coming. It was one of those one-punch reversals of fortune which are so often encountered in boxing fiction, but happen less often in the ring. Rodriguez went down and failed to beat the count.

It was the end of his serious world title aspirations. But he carried on fighting until 1971 when a defeat on points at the hands of the British middleweight champion Bunny Sterling at the Royal Albert Hall, London, finally persuaded him to retire. Though the fight had been billed as a world title eliminator it was quite clear that 34 years and four world title fights had eroded Rodriguez's powers beyond recognition. At his peak, he would have had no trouble at all in dispensing of a proficient, but essentially moderate, British and Commonwealth champion, who had no serious aspirations at world title level.

Like so many fighters, Rodriguez had, in spite of his protests to the contrary, overstayed his welcome in the ring, and that had taken its toll of him. In retirement he remained in America, in Miami Beach where he had first come from Cuba. But latterly he had been in poor health with kidney problems, and had had to undergo dialysis for the past two years.

He is survived by his wife Milagros and a son.

DR ALEXANDER SHULMAN

Alexander Shulman, surgeon, died in Los Angeles on July 7 aged 81. He was born on June 22, 1915.



ALEXANDER SHULMAN was the Canadian physician who changed forever medicine's approach to the emergency treatment of burns. He was the brother of the theatre critic Milton Shulman, and the uncle of Alexandra Shulman, the Editor of British Vogue.

Alexander G. Shulman (he added the initial, which did not stand for anything, to make more of an impression as a young man) was educated at Harbord Collegiate in Toronto, and gained his medical degree at the University of Toronto in 1939. He resented in Los Angeles and became a resident in pathology and later surgery at Cedars Sinai Medical Center. During the Second World War he served as a neurosurgeon in the Army Medical Corps and saw action in France and Germany in the period following D-Day.

He returned to Los Angeles in 1945 and established a private practice in general surgery which he kept running until 1991, in addition to his work at the Cedars and as chief of surgery at Midway Hospital.

His work on burns began in the early 1950s, after Shulman had burnt himself badly when he accidentally spilled burning grease on his hand. In the ensuing moments of agonising pain, he instinctively plunged his hand into a tub of cold water. "The immediate relief of pain was so impressive that I kept the hand immersed in water for about one hour, since its momentary removal caused the return of the original intense pain. After about one hour, it was possible to remove the hand

without pain." From that moment on, he felt no pain, and the burn healed more rapidly than expected. This, however, flew in the face of conventional medical wisdom at the time, which held that burns must be treated by the application of butter or grease.

Shulman tried the treatment again on a frightened three-year-old girl, who was brought to him after having burnt her hands on some hot water pipes. She was in great distress, but again the cold water brought immediate relief, so much so that the child refused to remove her hands until some time later. Afterwards, there was no blistering.

Shulman continued to use ice-cold wet towels and water on burns victims. When he was completely confident of the correctness of his findings, he shared his experience with his colleagues, writing a full article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1960. Because of Shulman's carefully documented evidence, what was re-

garded at first as a cranky idea, became the standard first aid treatment for minor burns.

Shulman had a roving medical mind, and after several trips to China became fascinated by eastern methods of surgery, and wrote a book on the subject. He championed the use of heparin, a blood-thinning drug, to prevent heart attacks; and the adoption of high-fibre diet as a preventative measure against diverticulosis.

He was also associated with a new treatment for hernias. He had switched, after the war to abdominal surgery, having become disheartened by the inevitably high mortality rate in neurosurgery. The new Lichtenstein method of hernia repair, a minimally invasive procedure which used tension-free mesh, had an impressive low recovery rate, and allowed patients to return home shortly afterwards. Unlike conventional hernia surgery patients, who were obliged to undergo a lengthy period of convalescence, patients being treated by the new method could be back at their desks, normally, in about a week. After his retirement from private practice, in 1991, Shulman became director of the Lichtenstein Hernia Institute. How to do it Right, his book about hernia operations, is about to be published.

Shulman wrote for medical journals, and was a frequent contributor to *The New York Times*. He also published letters in *The Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal*. In recognition of his achievements, he was made an honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons only three days before he died.

He is survived by his wife Constance, whom he married in 1946, and by their son and daughter.

H. P. JACOB

"Jake" Jacob, former England rugby player, died at Myaree in Western Australia on July 8 aged 93. He was born in Folkestone on October 12, 1902.

DESCRIBED as "a beautiful runner who was made for the attack rather than the defence", "Jake" Jacob was the last surviving member of the victorious 1924 England rugby team. He was first capped during his freshman year at Oxford University, a period when the Dark Blues were rich in talent.

Although he won the first of his three Blues at centre, England chose him against Wales on the wing for his vibrant pace, in what proved to be a second successive grand-slam season. Jacob rewarded them with a try described by Wavell (later Lord) Wakefield as "one of the best I have ever seen." England played a first first quarter at Swansea to give their four newcomers the chance to settle down before Jacob, retrieving his own misadventure on England's try-line, sparked the passing movement which he completed at the other end of the field.

England won 17-0 and, for the next match, a 14-3 victory against Ireland, Jacob was moved to centre where he set up a try for Len Corbett before reverting to the wing against France in what became a personal triumph. He scored three tries in a 19-7 win, a feat not repeated by an England player until John Carleton in 1980, when England also won a grand slam. A triumphant season ended with a 19-0 win over Scotland.

But Jacob was only capped once more, against France in 1930 when he was teaching at Cranleigh School — though, since that match was also successful, it gave him the distinction of an entire international career spent on the winning side.

PARIS AND BACK IN SEVEN HOURS

The flying race from London to Paris was won on Saturday by the American W.L. Brock who performed the double journey of rather over 500 miles in the actual flying time of 7hr. 3 min. 6 sec. at an average speed of 71½ miles an hour. He has thus won each of the three principal races starting from the Hendon Aerodrome this year. The starting time had been postponed from 5am to 6.30, but even so the mist hung low, and there seemed little chance of the competitors finding their way safely to Epsom, whence a clearer atmosphere was reported. It was not until an hour later that, in spite of the mist's being almost as bad as ever, the start was given in T.E. Hearn, who took with him his wife as passenger. His engine, however, at once gave trouble, and, though after some delay he succeeded in flying round the aerodrome, the onlookers were much relieved when he abandoned the struggle. Others were unable to take part in

ON THIS DAY

July 13, 1914

Three of the aircraft taking part, including that of the winner were French monoplanes; Lord Carbery's machine was a Bristol biplane, the engine of which was recovered.

the race for various reasons, so that of the 14 competitors entered only six got away to Paris. Renaux, who was accompanied by Miss Unwin, returned seven minutes after starting, and reported the fog too thick for him. He set off again an hour later, and after alighting at Epsom and at Gravesend to ask the way, reached Buc at 2.48. He flew back to England yesterday. Noel broke down and stopped near Rye. Carr got lost and came down at Kenton near Harrow. Brock reached Buc in 3 hr. 33 min and

Lord Carbery in 3hr. 54min. As the minutes went by excitement grew among the huge crowd at Hendon. At length Brock appeared, flying high over Harrow, and landed amid tremendous enthusiasm. Alone of the competitors he had never previously crossed the Channel.

As time went on and nothing further was heard of Lord Carbery except that he had left Harlow at 4.55, considerable anxiety prevailed. At about 8.45 news reached Hendon that he had come down in the Channel, but had been picked up. It appears that before leaving Paris his engine showed signs of not getting its proper supply of petrol. The weather over the Channel was misty, and when a few miles off Folkestone, Lord Carbery, who was still having trouble with his engine, flew near a small tramp steamer and gently alighted on the water. He was soon picked up by the steamer and was later transferred to his Majesty's battleship St Vincent, which was cruising in the neighbourhood. After dining on board he was landed at Folkestone.

HELEN GLATZ

Helen Glatz, composer, died on June 15 aged 88. She was born on March 13, 1908.

THE 20th century has not proved especially kind to female composers in Britain. Predicting the difficulties which lay ahead, Helen Glatz left for Rome, Vienna and Budapest on a travelling scholarship shortly after graduating from London's Royal College of Music in the early 1930s.

When the Red Army marched into Budapest in February 1945, Helen Glatz returned, after many hazardous adventures, to Britain. A contemporary at the Royal College, Imogen Holst, found her a job. Holst was then director of music at Dartington Hall, an arts centre established by Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst. Glatz was taken on at Dartington Hall as a teacher, and spent the remainder of her years there, splitting her time between education, performance and composition.

Every year Glatz composed a Christmas present for the

Elmhirsts. Her 1958 gift, *Five Carols Without Words*, became her best-known work and was one of the few in her large output to be published. Her compositions were in the English rural tradition, not dissimilar in style to those of Vaughan Williams. However, while she was respected in the profession, she never achieved wide public recognition.

Born in South Shields to Scottish parents, Helen Sinclair Hunter was taken under the patronage of a local choral conductor and early music scholar, Dr William G. Whitaker. She won an open scholarship to the Royal College of Music where she studied composition with Ralph Vaughan Williams, orchestration with Gordon Jacob, piano accompaniment and chamber music. Imogen Holst was a contemporary as was Benjamin Britten, Elizabeth Maconchy and Thea Musgrave.

Afterwards, Glatz's interest in gypsy music and folk rhythms drew her to Hungary where Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly had reached the height of their fame by creating a new



Hungarian music based on folk sources. When her scholarship expired, Glatz remained in Budapest, and earned a living by teaching and composing. She worked and studied with Kodaly and the violinist Sandor Vegh, and obtained Hungarian nationality in 1938 through her marriage to Wolf Glatz, the son of

the country's leading portrait painter. This brought her access to all the lively musical and intellectual life of prewar Hungary.

When the Red Army took Budapest, Glatz and her family (she now had a son, Christopher) lived, quite literally, underground in tunnels and cellars, plotting their escape. Destitute, she made her way with her son to Dartington and arranged for her husband to join them.

Under successive directors Helen Glatz became a permanent member of the Dartington teaching staff. She accompanied, choral, taught and played percussion, conducted orchestras, coached soloists and worked at her compositions in a cottage on the estate.

Dance was a form that particularly interested her. In hospital during her last days she was writing a ballet based on observing the movement of raindrops down the window pane. She had a strong feeling for rhythm, something which she felt modern composers had neglected to their cost. She achieved wider recogni-

tion later in life through her compositions for bassoon, among them her *Hungarian Folk Song Suite* for two bassoons and piano and her *Suite for Solo Bassoon and Piano*. In 1940 Glatz's chamber work, *Elegy*, was performed by the Goldberg Ensemble in London and on tour. Other works of hers received occasional performances, principally at Dartington. A great deal of Glatz's music was commissioned, paid for and performed, but not published, although her cause recently has been championed by the adventurous Lancaster-based music publishers, Phylloscopus.

She drew inspiration from everything about her. Three years ago she was viewing an exhibition in the Dartington Gallery by the sculptor Heathcote Jansch. After three hours admiring a small collection of horses carved from driftwood she marched out, waving her walking stick in the air and announcing that she immediately had to write another piece of music.

Helen Glatz was as firm to her musical principles as she was with the musicians with whom she worked. Those pupils who attended her classes ill-prepared, or conductors who strayed from the score, soon regretted doing so. Nevertheless it was this loyalty, to her students and her music, that kept her so active in old age.

Her husband died in 1952 and she is survived by a son.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ANGELICONS can trace your family tree, research, compile, publish, etc. (01280 880039) (NHS)

SITUATIONS WANTED

OUTSTANDINGLY healthy, educated, travelled, mature gentleman would tutor, drive, etc. (01280 880039) (NHS)

LEGAL NOTICES

HYPHOCORP LIMITED (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION)

Company number: 1888572

NOTICE TO THE CREDITORS

On 27 June 1996 the company was placed in members' voluntary liquidation and P.N. Street of PricewaterhouseCoopers was appointed liquidator by the shareholders.

The liquidator gives notice under the provisions of the Insolvency Act 1986, that he has received from the company a statement of assets and liabilities, and that he is now in a position to make a final distribution of the assets of the company to the creditors.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY JULY 13 1996

Hilldown removed pension scheme cash

By JON ASHWORTH

HILLDOWN HOLDINGS, the food and drinks group headed by Sir John Nott, former defence secretary, unlawfully removed £18.4 million from one of its pension schemes, the High Court ruled yesterday. The ruling leaves Hilldown facing the prospect of a substantial payment, and has important implications for members of other company schemes.

At worst, Hilldown will have to repay the full amount plus interest, although the ruling leaves scope for a lower settlement. The judge ruled that Hilldown was unjustly enriched by £18.4 million, less tax at 40 per cent. However, he called for submissions on a remedy that would be "proportionate to the injustice suffered". Lawyers are expected to return to court within the three weeks.

Sir John Nott was not chairman at the time of the dispute, which dates back to 1983, when Hilldown took over Fastack Marketing Corporation (FMC), a meat processing company with a sizeable surplus in its pension scheme. In a series of transactions, the assets of the FMC pension scheme were transferred by its trustees to a Hilldown fund, which used £15 million to improve the benefits payable to 2,000 FMC pensioners. The surplus of £18.4 million was paid to Hilldown. Members of the FMC scheme later complained to the Pensions Ombudsman, Dr Julian Farrand, about the payment.

Last October, Dr Farrand ruled the FMC trustees had acted in breach of trust. He found that this breach amounted to maladministration causing injustice to the complainants. The Hilldown trustees were also found to have acted in breach of trust. Dr Farrand found that Hilldown had breached the duty of good faith by inducing the FMC trustees to act in breach of trust. He instructed Hilldown to return the money. Mr Justice Knox ruled that assets had been improperly taken out of a pension fund, but stopped short of ordering full repayment of the funds. In a judgment that ran to 110 pages, he said Hilldown had taken a very active part in persuading the FMC trustees to agree to a breach of trust.

David Parkin, head of the litigation department of Paines & Co, solicitor to the Ombudsman, said: "This significant High Court decision highlights the vital role of the Pension Ombudsman in protecting the interests of pension scheme members." Hilldown said it had acted on the basis of specialist legal advice. *Tempus, page 30*

Lloyd's in profit for first time since 1987

By SARAH BAGNALL

LLOYD'S of London unveiled a record profit of £1.08 billion for the 1993 year of account yesterday — its first profit for six years. The result contrasts sharply with the £358 million loss incurred on risks insured during 1992, which helped to push to more than £8 billion the losses borne by names over a five-year stretch. The news comes ahead of Monday's key annual meeting in London at which Lloyd's will receive a clear signal as to whether its ambitious multi-billion pound restructuring plans stand a chance of succeeding. Several thousand of the market's names are to vote on whether they are prepared to contribute £440 million towards a £3.1 billion settlement offer. A refusal will leave little prospect that the offer, which is partly an out-of-court settlement aimed at ending litigation, will be accepted by Lloyd's 34,000 names. The turnaround in the market's fortunes reflects a fall in the number of major catastrophes, together with sharply higher insurance rates. Whereas in 1992 the insurance market was hit by the Andrew and Iniki hurricanes and the IRA bomb in the City of London, the insurance market

escaped relatively unscathed in 1993. Ron Sandler, chief executive of Lloyd's, said: "I'm pleased to tell you that the 1993 profits, as good as they are, are not a one-off." The favourable conditions continued into 1994 and 1995 and, as a result, Lloyd's is forecasting a profit of £1 billion for the 1994 year of account, and £882 million for the 1995 year of account. Mr Sandler added: "These three years taken together represent the most profitable years in the history of the society." Lloyd's still operates under a three-year accounting system and these results are not due to be announced, therefore, until 1997 and 1998 respectively. The results are struck after the deduction of names' personal expenses, which in 1993 totalled £453 million, and assumes the payment of £183 million of the £440 million special contribution. The balance of the special contribution is payable out of the profits of 1994 and 1995. The special contribution will be refunded to names. The 1993 profit is the first since 1987, when Lloyd's notched up a return of £509.2 million. Then came the losses, partly because there was a string of major disasters incurred in each year, and partly because of significant losses feeding through from asbestos and pollution risks insured decades before. The long and costly list of catastrophes included the Piper Alpha oil rig explosion, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the European storms, and the hurricanes Hugo and Bob. On Monday, thousands of names are expected to gather at Lloyd's annual meeting, which is to be followed immediately by an extraordinary meeting. The latter was called by a group of dissident names, who are demanding that the ongoing Lloyd's market pays existing names a levy worth about £3 billion over the next 15 years. The "sponsors" of the EGM, who include the Lloyd's Names Association's Working Party (LNAWP), have tabled four resolutions. They include the compulsory 2 per cent levy on turnover and a doubling of the contribution — to £400 million — from Lloyd's managing agents.



William Waldegrave, left, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, stroll at the Chancellor's official home in Kent at the start of talks to draft the November Budget

Cellnet is told to end advert

By ERIC REGULY

THE Advertising Standards Authority has ordered Cellnet, the second-largest mobile phone company, to withdraw advertising that made misleading price comparisons with the rival Orange. The ASA decision emerged just days after Orange won a victory in the High Court over Vodafone, the market leader, which had accused Orange of malicious falsehood in price-comparison advertisements late last year. Cellnet, the ASA ruled, made "selective, misleading and unfair" claims in advertisements in the national press and the trade press in December. The advertising stated: "If you are still with Orange we recommend that you get your bill examined." Cellnet said that it will appeal against the ASA's decision "on a matter of principle" only because new tariffs have been introduced and the advertisements are no longer running. Vodafone is considering appealing against the High Court decision. Orange's victories have stung Cellnet and Vodafone, which are expected to retaliate with new advertising comparing prices, and perhaps with price cuts. Rivalry between the mobile phone companies has intensified as market growth has begun to slow.

Profit error of £590,000 at Eadie

By CLARE STEWART

EADIE, the engineering group, made a £590,000 error in counting stock and work in progress, leading to an overstatement of its 1995 figures. The error was made by internal accountants and was not found by Ernst & Young, the auditor. The company, based in Oldham and the largest supplier of wheelchairs to the NHS, has invited KPMG, as independent accountants, to review the financial systems of its MCM subsidiary, in which the error occurred. Mike Green, Eadie's managing director, said: "It is a straight arithmetic mistake in counting stock and work in progress." The company says that it is an isolated event that will not recur. For the year to December, Eadie reported pre-tax profits up from £780,000 to £3.51 million, now adjusted to £2.9 million. The error was made by Eadie Holdings' internal accountants, whose figures were accepted by the external auditor, Ernst & Young. Mr Green said that he could not comment as to whether Ernst & Young would remain Eadie's auditor.

Eggar 'proud' of Energy closures

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

TIM EGGAR, the Energy Minister, yesterday defended the decision to push ahead with the flotation of British Energy in spite of last-minute power station closures. Mr Eggar said he was "very proud" of the way an announcement was made that two nuclear power stations had been closed. The news had been covered in the press after the closure of the public offer for British Energy, although the stations had shut the previous night. He denied there had been an information cover-up or that talks had taken place between the Government and British Energy, the company comprising the UK's eight newest nuclear generators. Mr Eggar said the shutdown decision was taken by British Energy's safety committees rather than the general management. "It is a tremendous tribute to the safety committees," he said. "Clearly there couldn't have been a more sensitive time." A Stock Exchange inquiry is being conducted into the implications and timing of the announcement, which enabled institutional shareholders to reconsider investing but not public investors. But it is understood that the company and the Government is likely to escape action because a statement on the closures had been issued. The Minister denied that the closures were sufficient to halt or delay the float. "These problems were covered in the prospectus and the closures did not affect the listing requirements." Yesterday the institutional offer for the shares closed and trading begins on Monday. The grey market showed a flat price after the closures, with the first instalment put at 105p compared with private investor offer price of 100p and an institutional price of 105p. Mr Eggar delivered the strongest warning yet to electricity companies yesterday to speed up preparations for competition in the domestic market. He said that regional companies would be forced to bear the cost of any delay or problem in the introduction of competition in 1998, and that chief executives of the companies would be held directly responsible for implementation in their region.

Kellogg's crunch over toy trucks

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE disappointment felt by thousands of children when the Crazy Horse, Thunder Warrior, Firestorm and Red Dragons toy trucks they had been promised on packets of Kellogg's Corn Flakes failed to arrive is set to land two supply companies in court. The brightly painted Power Trax Super Trucks were part of a Kellogg's promotion. The trucks could be had, 35 million packets promised for eight coupons — carefully

cut out with parental supervision — sent together with 20p for postage and packing. Kellogg's says it ordered more than a million of the toy trucks in 1994 and 1995 from Leicester-based sister companies Ideal Toys and Majorette Toys. Kellogg's alleges only around half were delivered on time. With Kellogg's unable to satisfy all its young customers, the company claims it had to deal with 4,500 complaints in writing and more than 2,500 by telephone. The promotional campaign was a

flop. There was no one available at the suppliers or Ideal Loisirs, their Paris-based parent company, to comment yesterday. Kellogg Company of Great Britain this week served a writ on the two suppliers for breach of contract. It is seeking damages to compensate it for costs allegedly incurred in issuing thousands of discount vouchers, costing it £330,071. It is also seeking an assessment of damage for lost sales and intends to press for payment in full, plus interest.

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	3728.3	(-20.7)
FT-SE All share	1858.40	(-10.82)
Nikkei	21658.45	(-236.13)
New York		
Dow Jones	5498.74	(-21.80)
S&P Composite	643.04	(-2.63)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	8 7/8%	(8 7/8%)
Yield	7.00%	(7.00%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Libor long call	106 1/2	(107 1/4)
STERLING		
New York	1.5530*	(1.5544)
London	1.5531	(1.5557)
\$	2.3837	(2.3673)
DM	8.0010	(8.0104)
FF	1.9534	(1.9560)
Yen	171.85	(171.49)
S. Index	86.4	(86.5)
DOLLAR		
London	1.5218*	(1.5219)
DM	5.1520*	(5.1475)
FF	1.2583*	(1.2572)
Yen	110.67*	(110.27)
S. Index	97.5	(97.4)
Tokyo close Yen 110.13		
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Sep)	\$19.40	(\$19.50)
GOLD		
London close	\$383.99	(\$383.45)

* denotes midday trading price

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A suitable case for making Ombudsman answerable

You have a complaint about unfair treatment. Where do you take it? If your complaint is to do with financial services, you have a wide choice — the Investment Ombudsman, the Insurance Ombudsman, the Pensions Ombudsman, the Financial Ombudsman, the Banking Ombudsman, or perhaps even the hard-worked Building Societies Ombudsman.

But if your complaint is about the unfairness of the Ombudsman system who do you turn to? There is now such a proliferation of Ombudspersons in this growth industry that surely consumerists could argue that we need an Ombomb to regulate them, all before matters get further out of hand?

And, suspended over all, a Bomb (Bureau of Ombudsmen, perhaps), where victims with a grievance against the system could turn to for a quick, cheap, straightforward and fair resolution to their dispute.

Building Societies Ombudsman (BSO) scheme, for example, was admirable. Inevitably, with millions of customers and millions of transactions, disputes and disagreements will arise between building societies and their members, and it's right that customers should have access to an independent arbiter in such cases.

Quick, cheap, straightforward and fair are not adjectives that everyone would ascribe to lawyers or the court process, hence the need to create the BSO and his office.

Who was appointed Ombudsman? A lawyer. Whom did he appoint to assist him? More lawyers. In fact, the BSO's latest annual report shows 14 of the 17 "case handlers" are lawyers so we ought not to be surprised if the service they provide is more akin to that of the legal system than was originally intended.

Delays and the use of lawyers all add to the costs. In addition to a fixed charge and an asset-

related charge, there is a case charge of £700 plus VAT that the building society has to pay for every case considered by the BSO. If a complainant seeks compensation of less than, say, £600, it's probably cheaper for the society to pay up regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case, simply to avoid the charge and onerous administration (with its associated staff costs) of dealing with the BSO.

An example. A customer takes a very large amount in coins into his branch and, although in excess of the society's internal limit, the cashier agrees to help by taking it. The customer objects to staying while it is counted and later submits a claim for £20 an hour for waiting and inconvenience, threatening to go to the Ombudsman. The society pays up for fear that the Ombudsman will take on the case and levy his charge.

The trouble is, the system is free — but only to the complainant, regardless of whether

EXECUTIVE VOICE



Andrew Longhurst

his complaint is valid, vexatious, or even dismissed. The cost of the BSO, his staff, their paper, their stamps and their envelopes is all borne by the building societies — in effect, by the generality of non-complaining building society members. Is that fair?

charge on all withdrawals, which is clearly spelt out in the literature. When the interest charge is levied, the customer complains to the Ombudsman.

This is a matter of principle so the society is forced to go through the whole process of its internal complaints procedure, of representations, preliminary determination and final determination. The BSO agrees that the literature is clear so the society wins the case but, of course, has to pay the case charge of £822.50. A bit steep for reading a leaflet, even for a lawyer.

So the costs of the system lead to unfairness. Underserving vexatious and frivolous claimants get paid out while the legalistic approach means cases are taken on that have no chance of succeeding and societies are charged.

Is it right that one man, the Building Societies Ombudsman, should be the sole arbiter of "fairness" on behalf of all build-

ing society members? Having found in favour of a society in a series of identical cases, he can wake up one morning, find his concept of fairness has changed and apparently quite legitimately start finding in favour of the complainants.

So now what have we got? Lots of lawyers, a system that is neither straightforward nor quick, in spite of what some may claim, not cheap and not fair to those who provide the money to keep the Ombudsman going — the building societies and their non-complaining members.

Why doesn't he streamline his system? Many customers of the former Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, aggrieved that the strictures of the 1986 Building Societies Act deprived them of a share of the £1.8 billion that Lloyds Bank paid last year to acquire C&G, took their grievances to the Ombudsman. The complaints stem from April 1994, more than two years ago, when we announced plans to join

the Lloyds Bank group. They fell largely into five categories, covering those deprived of continuity of membership because they switched between deposit and share accounts, those who thought we should have told them our plans for conversion before we knew them ourselves, and so on.

The BSO would not consider test cases but, instead, requested full representations on nearly 1,000 complaints, at an estimated cost to C&G of date of around £200,000. Further, he would not tackle any of them until August 1995, when our conversion was complete, and now, nearly a year later, he has still not finished the task that he mapped out for himself. I should add that he has found in favour of C&G in every case.

But quick? cheap? straightforward? fair?

Andrew Longhurst is chief executive, Cheltenham & Gloucester

Throgmorton to sell fund stake

By CLARE STEWART

THROGMORTON TRUST is to sell its 49 per cent stake in Framlington Holdings, the fund manager, to US group Munder Capital Management for up to £33 million.

The disposal marks Throgmorton's final move away from unquoted investments to focus on smaller quoted vehicles.

French bank Crédit Commercial de France, Framlington's majority shareholder,

retains its 51 per cent stake which it has held for five years.

Mike Vogel, group managing director of Framlington, welcomed the change. He said: "It gives us a partner who understands our business very well, a link to a successful organisation and access to the North American market."

Munder Capital Management is to pay £22.4 million in cash with £10.6 million in five-

year notes. Privately owned Munder, which is based in Birmingham, Michigan, was set up 11 years ago and manages more than \$3.5 billion, which puts it in the top 75 of US money managers.

Throgmorton also announced its interim results yesterday, showing a 10.7 per cent increase in net asset value to 92.9p. The return on the core equity portfolio was 17.5 per cent. This, said Lord

Stewartby, chairman, was "marginally ahead of the index return of 17.2 per cent".

Pre-tax profits fell from £6.5 million to £5.1 million, while the dividend is held at 0.9p. Lord Stewartby said that lower dividend income in the first half reflects the company's policy of moving out of high yielding equities to reinvest in lower yielding stocks "which may be expected to produce stronger growth in

capital performance and in dividends over time".

On current trading, Lord Stewartby noted that the recent falls in the stock market had affected its smaller companies holdings, but added that improvements in the domestic economy meant that "there is a prospect of improved growth in the coming year". Throgmorton Trust shares ended at 76½p, down 2½p.



British Bloodstock Agency, headed by Colin Bothway, made pre-tax profits of £97,000 in the year to the end of March (£137,000 loss). There is a 1.5p maiden dividend

Shake-up leads to ESB loss

Substantial provision for restructuring has resulted in record losses for the Electricity Supply Board (ESB), Ireland's state-owned electricity company, its annual report revealed yesterday.

An exceptional charge of 1r£367.3 million turned a record operating profit of 1r£83.6 million into a deficit of 1r£284.1 million. Turnover was up 5 per cent and electricity unit sales increased by 4.8 per cent.

The restructuring involves the reduction of the workforce by 2,000 over five years and a considerable contribution to the company pension fund.

Brewer debut

Belhaven, Scotland's largest regional brewer, was given a warm welcome by the City yesterday as its shares, placed at 180p, opened at a premium of 21p, lifting its market capitalisation to £40.2 million. They ended the day at 193p. The placing, oversubscribed, raised £25 million, allowing the group to redeem all its preference shares and reduce gearing.

Proteus sale

A £1 million payment to Proteus International for its anti-cancer drug helped the USM-quoted drugs company to stem its losses from £7.9 million to £5.4 million in the year to March 31. The deal, which sold the intellectual rights to its prostate cancer drug to ML Laboratories, lifted revenue to £1.1 million as the group recorded its first sales since 1993. Its shares closed down 6p at 67p.

Kept plan

Kleinwort European Privatisation Investment Trust (Kept) yesterday notified its investors of plans for a buyback which it hopes will shore up its share price, now trading at a 14 per cent discount to its net asset value. The buyback will involve replacing every 100 existing ordinary shares with 40 new shares and 60 convertible loan stock units.

Food buyout

A management buyout at Continental Foods is to take the snacks company private. CF Holdings, the new management company backed by International Mezzanine Investment, the venture capital group, is offering £16.1 million: 108p in cash per share and 23p in cash per warrant. The shares jumped from 69p to 103p.

Cadbury-style employment inquiry urged

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Bank of England should set up a Cadbury-style corporate governance group to examine employment in Britain, a new report says today.

Companies and their employees should also carry out an annual "quality audit" of employment practices, the report adds.

The report, from the Fabian Society, a left-of-centre think tank, precedes the findings of the Cadbury 2 committee, chaired by Sir Ronald Hampel, which is examining corporate governance issues under the auspices of the Stock Exchange. Today's Fabian Group report says that the Bank's inquiry should aim to develop a code of practice on employment, with the clear objective of focusing on business competitiveness and the maximisation of productivity based on partnership at work. The group, which includes business leaders from J

Sainsbury, Boss and Roadchef, as well as academic, trade union and independent specialists, proposes that such a code should focus on transparent and open employment relations, good communications, proper dispute resolution and full dialogue.

The Fabian study identifies two key priorities — increasing the productivity and competitiveness of business life in the UK, and improving quality of life.

Explicitly rejecting extensive and unnecessary labour market intervention, the study criticises the tendency in British business "to cut jobs first and ask questions later". It proposes that companies should detail, in their annual reports, steps taken that year towards skill development, and an annual job quality audit, aimed at ensuring the delivery of personnel policy objectives.

Rank plans to sell Shearings Coach

By BEN TOWNSEND

RANK ORGANISATION, the leisure and entertainment group, said yesterday that it is planning to sell Shearings Coach Company, its coach holiday business, as part of the reorganisation of the group.

Analysts said that Rank hopes to receive £75 million or more for the business.

Angus Crichton-Miller has resigned as managing director of Rank's holiday division to put together a bid for Shearings.

Rank said that it was not aware of any other potential takeover bidders for the coaching company.

The decision to sell

Shearings came after a strategic review conducted by Andrew Teare, Rank's chief executive, who determined that the company had little in common with Butlin's and Haven Caravans, Rank's location-based holiday companies. More details of the review will be released with Rank's interim results in August.

Shearings sells some 450,000 holidays per year in the UK and Europe and owns more than 300 coaches. The company, which was inherited by Rank when it bought Mecca in 1990, reported pre-tax profits of £8 million on turnover of £100 million last year.

Trading hopes grow after Mandela visit

TRADE between Britain and South Africa is expected to accelerate in the wake of the four-day visit by Nelson Mandela (Jon Ashworth writes).

Sir Colin Marshall, president of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), yesterday signed a business accord aimed at strengthening ties between the two countries.

A policy document, Growth, Employment and Redistribution, sets out ambitious plans for 6 per cent annual growth and the creation of 400,000 jobs a year by the year 2000.

Weekend Money, page 33

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.06	1.90
Austria Sch	17.04	18.14
Belgium Fr	51.71	47.41
Canada \$	2.237	2.077
Cyprus Cr	0.7615	0.7065
Denmark Kr	9.68	8.88
Finland Mk	7.80	7.15
France F	6.41	5.76
Germany Dr	2.519	2.399
Greece Dr	387	362
Hong Kong \$	12.88	11.68
Iceland Isk	113	92
Ireland P	1.025	0.945
Israel Sh	6.38	4.70
Italy Lit	2493	2338
Japan Yen	185.80	180.80
Malta	0.004	0.004
Netherlands Gld	2.807	2.577
Norway Kr	2.19	2.19
New Zealand \$	10.65	9.85
Norway Kr	254.00	255.50
Spain Ptas	7.35	6.55
Sweden Kr	20.80	193.00
Switzerland Fr	2.885	2.685
Turkey Lira	132.16	124.16
USA \$	1.602	1.523

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Bankers' Bank plc. Different rates for travellers' cheques. Rates as at 09.00 of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

It was the book they tried to ban. I was UBS's head of research and was sued because of the revelations. But the book, Accounting for Growth, shot up the bestseller lists as investors clamoured to read my guide to the tricks used by corporate Britain...

Terry Smith exclusively previews his new book — *Business, The Sunday Times* tomorrow

OUR MERSEYSIDE WORKFORCE IS ENERGETIC, WITH POSITIVE IDEAS FLYING AROUND THE PLANT. THEY ARE EXCELLENT TEAM PLAYERS

There's more to building a workforce than simply pulling together a lot of people and telling them to get on with it.

Johnson Controls are a 'just-in-time' company in the automotive industry, next door to Ford at Halewood. When they moved to Merseyside in '94, they devised their own job application form that looked for team players. People who played for a local football team. People who organised outings for the disabled.

From 600 interviews, 104 were chosen. Only 3 dropped out.

And after special training by one of Merseyside's three Training & Enterprise Councils, the 104 graduates went to work.

"Forget Liverpool or Everton. This is the best team on Merseyside."

When the production line started rolling, Johnson saw one or two things you rarely see coming off a conveyor belt.

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Their working methods have proved so successful that Johnsons have used some of their Merseyside workforce as consultants in developing their production line in Dagenham.

"I would like to take my workforce with me - wherever I go."

But the enthusiasm, teamwork and 'can-do' attitude you find on Merseyside aren't restricted to Johnson Controls.

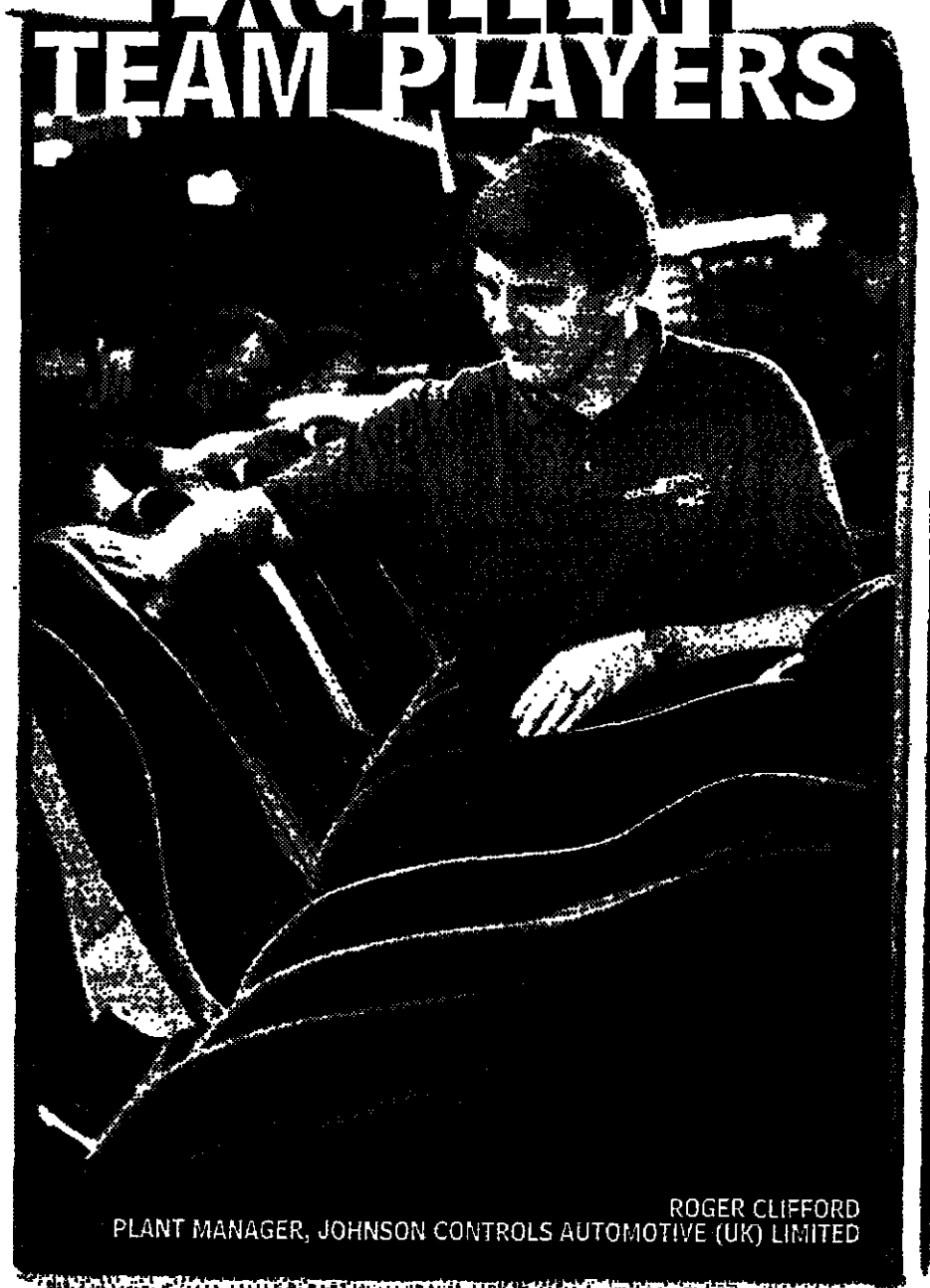
Ask the management teams at other car component companies, like Delco Electronics, Champion Spark Plugs and Mackie Automotives.

Outside the car business, ask oil and gas exploration company BHP, Glaxo, BICC or Kodak. (You really can ask them. As a new investor on Merseyside, you're invited to join a regular forum who pool their knowledge of the region and share those experiences with you).

And ask them about Merseyside's financial incentives, training assistance and site availability. Or the R&D opportunities with the two world class Universities.

But what about the team at Johnson?

They met their first production target way ahead of schedule. No surprises there. After all, Merseysiders have always been focused on getting their goals.



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A WORKING WEEK FOR: ROGER PAFFARD

Revolutionary takes over chocolate factory

Sarah Bagnall meets the former student firebrand drafted in to restore the fortunes of the Thorntons confectionary business

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

NOT many people can claim to have started their business careers by hurling bricks at French policemen. But then they are not Roger Paffard.

Paffard's brush with the law was in 1968, in France, when he found himself alone in Paris at the impressionable age of 17 during the student riots. With three A levels tucked under his belt at only 16 and a scholarship to read modern history at Oxford safely netted, Paffard was gaining work experience with a Paris advertising agency.

"I spent my days as a tea boy and junior account executive, and my nights throwing bricks at policemen," Paffard recalls. "Come to think of it, I've probably got an Interpol record somewhere."

Paffard has come far since his brick-throwing days and is now throwing his weight around as the new broom at Thorntons, the chocolate manufacturer and retailer. Paffard, 44, took over as chief executive at the start of the year, briefed to restore retailing's flagging fortunes.

"This has to be the ace job in the world," he says. "The offer was irresistible. Thorntons is a lovely brand. It has such innate strengths and the products are world-class. However, it is at a stage where it needs rejuvenating. The profit performance has at best been stagnant for the past four years and that is a great challenge."

In March, Thorntons revealed a slide in interim profits from £9.62 million to £7.63 million and gave warning that it would only achieve break-even at operating level in the second half. The profit warning was blamed on store refurbishment costs, the loss of franchise sales and the scorching summer of 1995.

Paffard is not new to restoring company fortunes and revitalising brands. After his Paris stint and university, he joined Lever Brothers as a graduate trainee. Two years later — at 22 — he was the brand manager in charge of Persil, the company's biggest grocery brand, and then, in 1975, he presided over its relaunch. A plethora of brands later, Paffard was on the move.

"It was a very stimulating intellectual climate that tolerated some eccentricities, but was full of very bright people," he recalls. "I really enjoyed it and did very well there. But, after seven years, I had done all there was for a 27-year-old to do. I was, in a sense, parked, as the youngest marketing manager was in his late 30s."

Paffard's next stop was Bristol-Myers, to spearhead revival of the Clairol hair colourants brand and embark on a string of marketing troubleshooting projects. Four years on, he moved to Alberto Culver UK. "They offered me the chance of being a managing director at the age of 30," he says, as if no further explanation is necessary. Five years on, Paffard was asked to leave after a row with his boss. Then came what Paffard believes has

been his biggest challenge to date — pulling Sharps Bedrooms, a fitted bedroom furniture retailer, back from the brink. "A job no one wanted," he says. Paffard pulled it off, and was then bored and ready for the next challenge. He became managing director of Staples, the office supplies joint venture between Kingfisher and Staples of the US, but the offer to run a public company proved too tempting and so Paffard found himself in the hot seat at Thorntons.

Grappling with a new company and its problems meant that his first six months have been hectic, hard work and extremely varied. Broadly, the time has split down into three two-month phases, he says.

"The first two months were just learning," he says. "I had no day-to-day pressures, so I had my dream start. The best bit was that I spent a week serving in our Derby marketplace shop, which was just magic. It was the week before Valentine's day. I have never giggled so much in my life. I did everything. I led badly. I gift-wrapped badly. I closed the shop inaccurately and I couldn't get the tills to balance."

Paffard learnt a lot from the experience and now all the company's managers must spend a week in a store. He went round 120 of the group's shops, talking to customers, managers and staff. "I had the luxury of listening for two months," he says. "Out of that, I got a very clear impression of what was wrong. There are a lot of symptoms, but just one issue. The business is a highly sophisticated, vertically integrated business, but the focus had moved away from the shops. We were doing a great job as a manufacturer and an advertiser and marketer of the

Thorntons brand, but we had not invested in the retail shops and had lost our edge. We had let them get very tired and forgotten they are the main driving force."

The old attitude reveals itself in the presence of sophisticated manufacturing systems, and the absence of an Epos electronic stock ordering system in the stores.

Paffard found that store managers were spending 18½ hours a week on administrative tasks — time they should have been spending serving customers or motivating staff. "This was all driven by attitude in that head office treated the shops as a service function," he says.

Paffard is determined to switch the emphasis back to the stores, and so Thorntons is in the throes of a major shop refurbishment programme. The attention to retail has not stopped there.

Before Paffard arrived, Thorntons had commissioned a study of its retail estate. The information, together with 1,400 customer interviews and Thorntons's rather unusual database of the chocolate market by postcode, produced a "golden nugget", in Paffard's words. "Put those three things together and we can work out what we should be doing in every single postcode," he says, getting excited.

The second two-month period was spent analysing this information and ideas and issues gleaned from his tour. Paffard discovered, using the company's own peculiar definition of the market, that when it got it right, it held 21 per cent of the market, compared to an average of 12 per cent. "So we can grow this business 70 per cent just by doing what we do in certain locations in all of them," he says.



Roger Paffard, head of Thorntons, decorating a chocolate figure at its new store in Leicester, opened as part of his drive to boost the "forgotten" retail side

years to achieve the desired 21 per cent market share. These include ideas on how to improve the product ranges, and on alternative distribution opportunities.

"That is improving what we have already got, turning ourselves into a lively retailer," he says.

In three years' time, however, Thorntons intends to have its 354 prime location stores all snapping up 21 per cent market share.

Then what? So, the other bucket is for things that the company should be developing and testing to drive up profits and sales between 1997 and 2000. "We have very rapid growth ahead of us for the next two

to three years by going back to basics, but if we don't do some of the groundwork now we will go ex-growth again," he says.

In the second category, is the Café Thorntons, the first of which opens in Moorgate, City of London, at the end of the month. "We are looking," says Paffard, "at joint ventures, coffee, confectionery, developing our ice cream business and a range of different sorts of chocolate products."

Paffard admits that it is hard work, and his days are long. He often arrives at the office for an 8.30am meeting — and 8am is not unheard of. "My metabolism responds to the challenge," he says. "If I have lots to do, I just wake up early."

Three weeks ago, Paffard and his wife, Marguerite, and two children, Danielle, nine, and Rebecca, seven, moved to the

Nottingham outskirts. Paffard says that his wife, an NHS consultant psychiatrist, was surprisingly happy about the move because she wants to start an organic subsistence farm.

There was a different response from his younger daughter, Paffard recalls. "The other day, Rebecca said 'What was the point of moving, daddy? We don't see you anyway.' He admits this is true because he gets home late virtually every night."

"The kids go to bed at 9pm, and I haven't put them to bed since we have been here," he says. "I do see the family at weekends. Marguerite would say not enough. But they do recognise me when I come in. Rebecca asks 'What do you do, daddy, at this chocolate factory? Do you make the chocolates?' No. 'Well, what do you do?'"

HIDDEN ASSETS

Traditional touch that makes Harrods a thoroughbred store

Harrods, the most famous shop in Britain, has always been an alluring place of theatrical glamour, even to those who have never stepped inside its doors. Everyone knows the supposed reply of an assistant faced with an inquiry over the availability of live Indian elephants: "The impossible will take a little longer, sir."

Since 1985, when Mohamed Al Fayed beat off his rival, Tiny Rowland, in the battle for ownership of Harrods, the symbolic — and actual — glitter of the institution has markedly increased. Certainly Mr Al Fayed, who lives the fairly normal everyday life of the super rich — houses in London and Paris, an estate in Surrey, a villa in Gstaad,

Joanna Pitman finds out just how hard Al Fayed's equine investment is working

yachts in the south of France, armour-plated limousines, bodyguards, etc — likes a bit of theatre. When in town he manages to get involved in plenty of "Harrods happenings" or photo opportunities.

One of his early interventions on styling matters was when he bought a team of Dutch Friesian horses, all jet black, and had them trained for daily deliveries.

Today the team has grown in size to nine Dutch Friesians, a mixture of mares and stallions, and three shire horses, all of which divide their time between their own immaculate Harroddian green stables in Trevor

Square and the comfort of the Al Fayed estate in Surrey. There are always at least four stabled in London, setting off as a team twice a day, six days a week, pulling a delivery van bound for Buckingham Palace, St James's Palace or Kensington Palace, and the largest of London's grand hotels.

David West, the head coachman, says: "We go out in any traffic conditions and do a tour to the palaces first with all sorts of things on board. There is usually a consignment for one or other of the palaces, and then we go on to

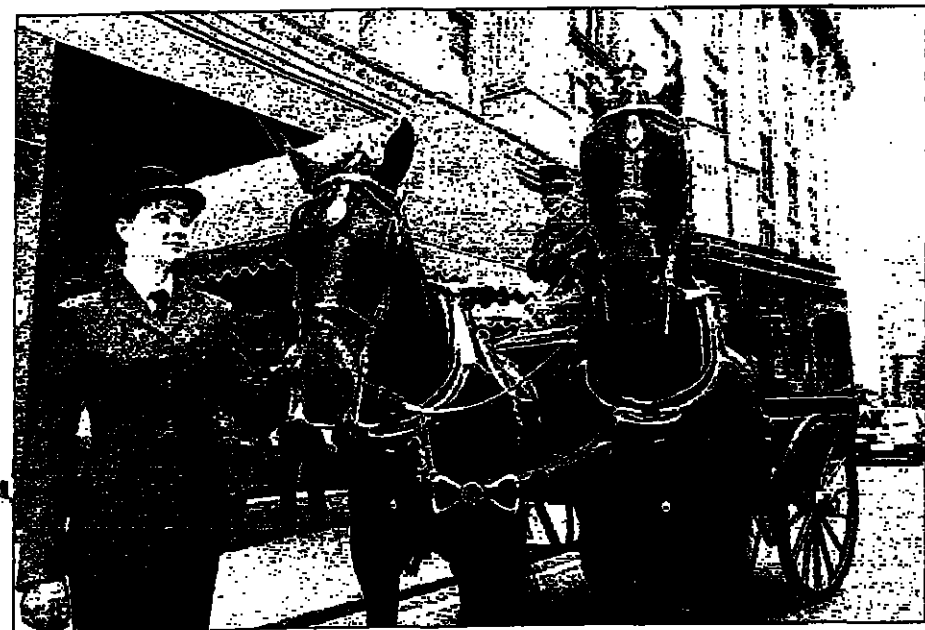
hotels like the Connaught and the ones on Park Lane. If there are no deliveries, we still go out and do a tour to exercise the horses and display the Harrods carriage."

Harrods has a team of eight full-time horse handlers, four in Surrey who train the young horses and exercise them on a new one-and-a-half mile all-weather track; and four in London — dressed in Harrods green jodhpurs — who muck out, maintain the harnesses, clean and groom the horses. A collection of original carriages, including an 1860 French omnibus, an open-top landau and a 1910 brewery dray with iron tyres — used to promote Harrods lager and ale — are also housed there.

For parades and special events, the landau is polished and given an outing, driven by Mr West in his green, Savile Row coachman's tails and top hat. "I've had all sorts of celebrities in my carriage," he says. "Holly Hunter used it when she opened the sale on Wednesday."

Clearly the demanding attentions of the tourists of Knightsbridge and the effects of parading in heavy traffic has paid off, for the Harrods team has been scooping the prizes at the major shows in England this summer.

On Sunday they won first prize at the Sandringham driving trials, the week before they won first prize at the Royal Norfolk Show, and the previous weekend they won first prize and the championship at the Windsor show.



Mane attraction: Helen Batty, groom, with John Peacock, driver, and two of the horses

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

British Biotech cash call in danger as shares fall

THE £143 million rights issue of high-flying British Biotech was perched on the edge of disaster last night, with both the ordinary and nil-paid shares again in free-fall.

This week's shake-out of the biotechnology sector could not have come at a worse time for the company and the underwriters backing its fund-raising exercise.

The price of the ordinary dropped a further 27p to £20.50, at one stage going to a discount of £20.30. The nil-paid halved to just 18p, compared with the 35p they started the week at. The ordinary shares are now hovering just above the terms of £20.50 a share issue, with the nil-paid at a clear discount ahead of going fully paid next week.

Only last month British Biotech shares reached a closing high of £32.64, after briefly zooming up to £37.00, a rise on the year of £20.43. High hopes have been pinned on Marimastat, the group's pancreatic cancer treatment, but brokers say the shares appear to have run too far, too fast and are now paying the price.

It now looks as if Kleinwort Benson, the company's financial adviser, which underwrote the issue, will have to exert all its financial muscle to stop the issue becoming a flop.

Other biotechnology shares have been hit, despite optimistic words this week from the likes of Lehman Brothers, the broker, have continued to lose ground. Losers yesterday included Chiroscience, down 7p at 34p, having touched a peak of 51p recently. Shire Pharmaceuticals, down 18p at 23p, and Celis International, down 2p to 117p.

Elsewhere investors were making themselves scarce in the wake of the overnight losses on Wall Street that saw the Dow Jones average slump 83 points on the back of a profits warning from Hewlett-Packard.

Prices in London opened sharply lower amid fears of further losses in New York when trading resumed. They later rallied after the market had taken note of the latest US producer price and retail sales, which were much in line with forecasts. The FT-SE 100 index, which had looked like testing the 3,700 resistance level, eventually closed off the bottom with a fall of 20.7 points at 3,728.3, a fall on the week of 14.9. Selling pressure



BAA Group shares added 14p as BA shares fell 15.2p

proved minimal, despite further volatility on Wall Street and resumed trading, and this was reflected in turnover levels that saw total turnover struggle to breach the 600-million level.

Dealings are to begin on the grey market on Monday in British Energy. The price for private investors is expected to open at 105p, compared with

Doubts over the proposed merger between Varsity in the US and Lucas Industries has reflected on the latter's share price. But Panmure Gordon, the broker, is telling clients to buy the shares, down 1p at 224p, even if the merger does not go through. It estimates the break-up value of Lucas at least 260p a share.

the offer price of 100p. The pricing for institutional investors has yet to be announced. It is thought the premium may have been eroded by this week's announcement that two of its reactors had been shut down.

The fallout from the Sumitomo copper scandal has left its mark on RTZ, the mining finance group, which was left nursing a fall of 25p at 91p. Brokers are starting to take the view that the volatility of the copper price caused by

the shenanigans of Tassio Hamanaka, the Sumitomo copper trader who ran up losses of \$1.8 billion, are likely to impact on the group's profits.

BZW, the company's own broker, is still looking for £900 million pre-tax, while ABN Amro Hoare Govett has slashed its forecast for the current year from £975 million

Tuesday the Civil Aviation Authority, its regulator, will publish its report on the company containing recommendations on how much it should charge airlines to land at its airports, including Heathrow and Gatwick.

The apparent distrust of high technology stocks in the US following that profits warning from Hewlett-Packard spilled over into London. There were losses for companies like Sage, down 26p at 433p, Sema, 16p off at 702p, Micro Focus, 30p cheaper at 758p, and Azlan, 21p off at 884p. Eidos, which unveils figures next week, also fell 38p to 745p.

It probably was not the best day for BATM. Advanced Communications, to make its debut on AIM. Shares in the group, which makes high-speed data processing equipment, were placed by Shaw Capital at 125p after being oversubscribed more than twice. They opened unchanged and touched a peak of 130p before reverting to unchanged on the day.

Shares of Belhaven Brewery, Scotland's biggest independent brewer, made a confident return to the stock market. Placed at 180p, it opened at 191p and quickly touched 200p before settling at 198p, a premium of 18p.

GLT EDGED: Reflecting on the gains recorded this week, investors decided that a bout of good old-fashioned profit-taking was long overdue. As a result prices lost

ground, with London failing to join in the rally staged by US treasury bonds and German bunds on the back of the US economic numbers. As brokers were quick to point out, a heavy funding programme will be under way during the next few weeks and many investors are now being urged to bide their time.

In the futures pit, the September 5 per cent gilt finished £92 lower at £108.52 as a total of 48,000 contracts were completed. In longs, Treasury 5 per cent 2015 fell £5 to £98.1, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was one tick easier at £103.1.

NEW YORK: Shares on Wall Street continued to drop as some investors moved into cash and bonds. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 21.80 points at 5,498.74.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	5498.74 (-21.80)
S&P Composite	443.04 (-2.63)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	21656.45 (-236.13)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	10802.68 (-118.67)
Amsterdam:	
EOE Index	547.01 (-2.27)
Sydney:	
AO	2196.5 (-24.4)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	2541.26 (-31.28)
Singapore:	
SEAC	2209.42 (-15.71)
Brussels:	
General	9362.52 (-40.84)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2060.59 (-23.11)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	801.00 (-6.70)
London:	
FT 100	2745.2 (-17.6)
FT 250	3728.3 (-20.7)
FT-SE Mid 250	4316.5 (-27.2)
FT-SE 100	3728.3 (-20.7)
FT-SE Euroshare 100	1675.5 (-13.47)
FT All-Share	1856.4 (-10.62)
FT Non Financials	1972.6 (-12.14)
FT Financials	1125.9 (-0.04)
FT Govt Secs	90.05 (+0.09)
Bargains	28766
SEAQ Volume	642770
USM (Futures)	209.51 (-1.23)
US\$	1.5530 (+0.0007)
German Mark	2.3628 (+0.0007)
Exchange Index	86.4 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
ECU	1.3232
ESDR	1.0781
RPI	153.0 Jun 12/94 Jan 1989/90
RFX	126.16 Jun 12/94 Jan 1989/90

RECENT ISSUES

AFA Systems	136
Alumax	1068p + 21p
BATM Advncd Cms	125
Belhaven Brewery	198
Cirle Comms	180
Circuit	70
Concurrent Techn	19
Drings of Bath	4
Electronic Retailing	148
Independent Brit H	78
Intelligent Envs (94)	78
Jarvis Hotels (175)	170
Lotterylink	4
Lotterylink Warrants	1
NECA	18
Pace Micro (172)	187
Pordum Foods	4
Pordum Foods Wts	2
Sun Life & Provincia	216
Vocalis Group (93)	103
Whitard of Chelsea	150

RIGHTS ISSUES

Allen n/p (250)	2
Brit Btch n/p (2050)	18
Cowle n/p (355)	37
Dixon Mtrs n/p (220)	42
Doeflex n/p (230)	33
Greene Kg n/p (545)	67
Ind News n/p (1270)	20
Johnston Pps n/p (169)	6
Kays Food n/p (12)	1
Mackie Int n/p (275)	4
Orbis n/p (40)	4
Partico n/p (245)	45
Tinsley Rbr n/p (130)	5
TransTec n/p (103)	18
Vandy n/p (300)	13

MAJOR CHANGES

RISKS:	
MMT Comp	470p (-32p)
Jay Dyson	208p (-30p)
Business Post	458p (-11p)
Continental Fds	103p (+34p)
FALLS:	
Regent Inns	199p (-16p)
Shire Pharms	233p (-18p)
Evans Halsman	325p (-18p)
Miel	423p (-16p)

Closing Prices Page 43

TEMPUS

Rattling the cage

SOMEONE has run a stick across the bars of the cage at the institutional zoo. Two sleepy old lions called the Association of British Insurers and the National Association of Pension Funds have woken up and given perfunctory roars.

Their irritation is directed chiefly at the Office of Fair Trading which insists on reopening the debate about underwriting commissions. Also worrying are notices from high on the corporate ladder, suggesting that pre-emption rights — the rules that ensure that existing shareholders get a pro rata slice of any issue — should be abolished.

The ABI position paper now being circulated among the zoo population correctly points out that the rights issue discount is not a cost to the company if the dividend is adjusted pro rata. However, the organisation then contradicts itself by suggesting fixed underwriting com-

missions are not uncompetitive because the variation in risk is reflected in the discount rather than the fee.

Typically, the core of the underwriting in a rights issue is taken by the principal shareholders for whom the discount is therefore irrelevant and who, knowing the company well, see the risk as minimal. For the onsy cartel, underwriting commissions are more akin to a special dividend or a reward for loyalty. The ABI has the good grace to suggest a sliding scale of commissions as an alternative to this quaint tradition. But the real villains of this piece must be the finance realists of public companies. It is they who blindly swallow the rignormale which merchant bankers call corporate finance advice. More demanding customers should lead to more competition.

Throgmorton

THROGMORTON Trust's sale of its stake in Framlington marks two new beginnings. News for Framlington, which now sees American horizons opening up, and new for Throgmorton, which has unbundled itself at long last from the complex diversification of the late 1980s.

Throgmorton has taken longer than expected to clear its decks since announcing its intention in 1990 to get back to its core business of smaller quoted companies. In the interim it has seen its net asset value on a roller-coaster ride. Now approaching 1989 levels it stands at a 14 per cent discount to net asset value and looks cheap compared to a sector average of 10 per cent.

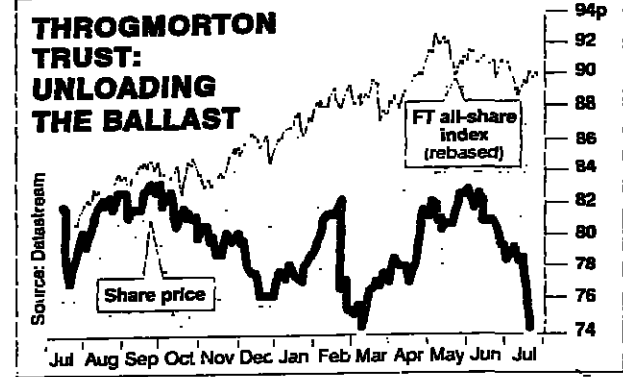
Yesterday's interim figures reflect the changes under

Throgmorton

way. Throgmorton has shifted its portfolio away from industrial to a broader spread of businesses. The move to higher growth but lower yield reduced the yield on its core dividend to 3.5 per cent, although still ahead of the market average of around 3.1 per cent.

Small companies have strongly outperformed the

market in the first half, says Throgmorton. While some of the firm may have gone out of the market, Throgmorton is taking an upbeat view on the market, and the cash from Framlington comes at an opportune time for investment. Having put its house in order, Throgmorton will be more attractive to investors and looks set to deliver.



Markets

AMERICA'S endless romance with technology has kept its stock markets bubbling for several years, interspersed with periodic jitters about interest rates. The market has assumed that the capacity of high-tech industries to innovate and create new products would keep earnings rising at a rapid rate. So far, the technology story has held good, but recent warnings from Motorola and Hewlett-Packard of a significant slowdown have prompted fears that the growth trend in information technology is flattening.

That is a worry for US investors but should cause fewer sleepless nights on this side of the Atlantic. High-tech companies such as HP, IBM, Intel and Microsoft make up a big proportion of the US market, where manufacturing industry still dominates the scene. By contrast, in the UK, the FTSE-100 index of leading shares is

Markets

awash with utilities, banks and other financial sector businesses.

The difference is reflected in the respective yield ratios of both markets: the US long bond yields more than three times the dividend yield on the S&P Industrial index, reflecting the extremely high expectations of growth and create new products would keep earnings rising at a rapid rate. So far, the technology story has held good, but recent warnings from Motorola and Hewlett-Packard of a significant slowdown have prompted fears that the growth trend in information technology is flattening.

What a pity that UK investors have more to fear from bearish noises out of the Federal Reserve Board in Washington than from the computer industry in California.

Hillsdown

HILLSDOWN has little choice but to bite its lip and pay the unfortunate pension-

ers of the Faststock Marketing Corporation. Of course, the company was reserving its right to appeal yesterday, returning the value of the surplus — some £10 million net of tax and including interest — will make a nasty hole in Hillsdown profits, which last year were about £10 million before exceptional items.

But Hillsdown would be foolish to appeal, just as it has been foolish in its resistance to negotiating a settlement with the pensioners. It is irrelevant that the company believes it had sound legal advice when it lifted the £18 million surplus from the fund by what appears to be a circuitous route.

In the present political climate Hillsdown will face a public relations disaster if it seeks to hang on to the funds. If Hillsdown thinks that it took expensive legal advice and feels let down, there is an obvious remedy. It should set the hounds on the hounds.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Current	Week's	Change	Notes
Continental Foods	103p	+32p	Chairman bids 108p a share
BSkyB	478p	+25p	Digital link-up with Kirch
Toad	85p	+18p	Increased competition from Skylink
Tractor Network	438p	+12p	Increased competition
GLS	210.45	+48p	Marlin Lynch recommendation
Great Universal Stores	838p	+35p	Prospects remain dull
Phoneline	158p	+22p	Increased losses
British Biotech	220.50	-30p	Biotech sector sell-off
RTZ	91p	-28p	Fall-out from Sumitomo scandal

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE		ICE-US (London & New York)		GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES	
Jul	Jul 13	Jul	Jul 13	Jul	Jul 13
Cocoa	1000-1040	Brent Physical	9.85 -0.15	Wheat (c/2)	111.00
Jul	1000-1040	Brent 15 day (Aug)	9.85 (n/c)	Barley (c/2)	105.00
Aug	1000-1040	Wheat Intermediate (Aug)	19.40 -0.05		
Oct	1000-1040	Wheat Intermediate (Sep)	21.05 (n/c)		
Dec	1000-1040				
Volume: 4438					
ROBUSTA COFFEE (c/2)		Soybean Oil (c/2)		RUBBER (No 1 RSS of p/m)	
Jul	1000-1040	Jul	1000-1040	Jul	1000-1040
Aug	1000-1040	Aug	1000-1040	Aug	1000-1040
Oct	1000-1040	Oct	1000-1040	Oct	1000-1040
Dec	1000-1040	Dec	1000-1040	Dec	1000-1040
Volume: 4438					
WHITE SUGAR (c/2)		BRENT (c/2)		BRENT (c/2)	
Jul	1000-1040	Jul	1000-1040	Jul	1000-1040
Aug	1000-1040	Aug	1000-1040	Aug	1000-1040
Oct	1000-1040	Oct	1000-1040	Oct	1000-1040
Dec	1000-1040	Dec	1000-1040	Dec	1000-1040
Volume: 2297					
MEAT & LIVESTOCK		LONDON METAL EXCHANGE		LIFE OPTIONS	
Jul	1000-1040	Jul	1000-1040	Jul	1000-1040
Aug	1000-1040	Aug	1000-1040	Aug	1000-1040
Oct	1000-1040	Oct	1000-1040	Oct	1000-1040
Dec	1000-1040	Dec	1000-1040	Dec	1000-1040
Volume: 2297					

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

FT-SE 100	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Previous open interest: 5626	Jul 96	3730.0	3740.0	3705.0	3720.0	10112
FT-SE 250	Jul 96	4300.0	4300.0	4285.0	4310.0	2
Previous open interest: 3740	Dec 96					
Three Month Sterling	Jul 96	94.30	94.30	94.20	94.20	9516
Previous open interest: 39305	Dec 96					
Three Mth Euro DM	Jul 96	94.21	94.21	94.10	94.20	17734
Previous open interest: 100944	Dec 96					
Long Gilt	Jul 96	96.79	96.79	96.70	96.70	20
Previous open interest: 135775	Dec 96					
Japanese Govt Bond	Jul 96	118.43	118.43	118.35	118.35	1460
Previous open interest: 20231	Dec 96					
German Govt Bond	Jul 96	95.78	95.78	95.70	95.70	13470
Previous open interest: 20231	Dec 96					
Three month ECU	Jul 96	95.78	95.78	95.70	95.70	1490
Previous open interest: 2484	Dec 96					
Euro Swiss Franc	Jul 96	97.24	97.24	97.20	97.20	10415
Previous open interest: 71610	Dec 96					
Italian Govt Bond	Jul 96	117.20	117.20	117.10	117.10	2042
Previous open interest: 1061	Dec 96					

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rate	Discount Rate	1 month	3 months	6 months	12 months
Bank of England	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Discount Rate	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Overnight	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Local Authority	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 day	1 month	3 months	6 months	12 months
Dollar	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Deutschmark	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
French Franc	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Swiss Franc	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Yen	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Gold	Silver	Palladium	Platinum
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000
1000	1000	1000	1000

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

City	Spot
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MANDELA'S MOVE 33

New South Africa
may reward
careful investors

WEEKEND
MONEY

SAVINGS 35

How to make the
most of your
investments



Nearest and dearest may miss out

Anne Ashworth on the complexities of the little
discussed death-in-service benefits system

There are some financial arrangements about which we are squeamish. Death-in-service benefits — the lump sum payouts and pension given to the dependants of employees who die before retirement — are high on this list. If contemplating old age and decline is difficult, then envisaging sudden death in the prime of life is still more painful.

However, as we explain below, the case of Jean Davies, widow of the chief executive of Bellwinch, has focused attention on these payments, previously regarded only as a valuable perk of company scheme membership, but little understood and even less discussed.

Employees presume that their benefits — which can amount to as much as four times basic salary — will go automatically to their nearest and dearest. But, in reality, pension scheme trustees enjoy the discretion to distribute the payments in a different way. For example, some public and private sector schemes ban payments to live-in lovers.

Although in Mrs Davies' case, her husband's former employer is laying claim to the death-in-service lump sum, actuaries confirm that companies usually have no claim on this cash. However, actuaries emphasise that, although employees are asked to name the

person they wish to receive their death-in-service benefits on an "expression of wish" form, the trustees can give the money to someone else they consider a more deserving case. The trustees are also obliged to follow the rules of the trust deed, which governs the running of the fund.

Roger Key, of Watson Wyatt, the actuarial firm, explains that the wish form "guides trustees and helps them to make a decision". He says: "In the vast majority of cases, they will follow the member's preference. But they may not do so, if the form is old and they know the deceased member's circumstances have changed."

Mr Key adds: "Trustee discretion is actually to the advantage of employees and their dependants. If company pension scheme members were able to specify exactly who should receive their death-in-service benefits, then the cash would pass into their estates and be subject to inheritance tax at the rate of 40 per cent."

The Pensions Ombudsman Office, which handles pension disputes, frequently deals with complaints about death-in-service benefits. Some come from families who feel they have been deprived of money that is rightfully theirs. Recently, the

Court of Appeal upheld an Ombudsman's ruling that the death-in-service benefits of a man who had divorced and then died should be paid to his ex-wife and children rather than to the woman with whom he had been living. The man had named his family, not his lover, on his expression of wish form, but the trustees had decided that she was the dependant. They were following the dictates of the trust deed that specified that only dependants could benefit.

Mr Key points out that all schemes will list those persons to whom trustees can pay benefits. "Some schemes, not necessarily all long-established ones, are quite restrictive and will not allow trustees to pay benefits to unmarried partners who were not dependant on the scheme member at the time of his or her death."

"The word 'dependant' can be defined in a very limited way. Take, for example, a woman who has her own career but has a child by her boyfriend, the deceased scheme member. It's possible that she might not qualify as a dependant under the rules of her partner's scheme, even if she had been named as his beneficiary," Mr Key suggests that anyone who is in a live-in relationship check carefully their scheme's dependant definition.



Deserving case? Trustees may decide to award an employee's death-in-service benefits to an ex-wife or live-in lover

Pensions plea for housewives

Calls for housewives and others without salaried income to be allowed to contribute to their own pensions were renewed this week amid growing fears that many people, and thousands of women in particular, face an impoverished retirement on an ever shrinking state pension.

The Simplifying Pensions Group believes that wives who do not work outside the home should be allowed to contribute to their own pensions from whatever money they have available from savings, inheritance or spouses. At present, Inland Revenue rules prevent them from paying into a pension because they have no earned income.

The current Inland Revenue rules affect women in particular, as many have extended career breaks to bring up children. They also exclude divorced women who are not working and depend on their husbands' pension.

After a long parliamentary battle, divorced women will now be able to claim a share of their husband's pension on divorce, although the exact details have yet to be worked out. But under present rules they will not be able to make extra contributions to their share in their own right unless they are working. Abolition of these restrictions would be part of a sweeping set of reforms in which people would be able to use whatever money they had to contribute as much as they liked to their pension to generate unlimited benefits. Members of company schemes would be allowed to have personal pensions at the same time. There would be no link between earnings and contributions.

An alternative system would establish an overall annual contribution limit — the group suggests £6,000 — or a lifetime limit of £240,000, adjusted in line with earnings, while abolishing other restrictions.

SARA MCCONNELL

Weekend Money
is edited by
Anne Ashworth

Widow's tale reveals shortcomings

The case of Jean Davies, widow of Raymond Davies, boss of Bellwinch, reveals the possible shortcomings of special "top-up" death-in-service benefit schemes.

These are now being set up in their thousands for managers with salaries above the Inland Revenue's earnings cap. This is the ceiling, currently £52,200, set on the earnings that can be taken into account when calculating a pension.

Benefits can be based on earnings above the cap, but they must be arranged through a separate plan, not through the company pension scheme. The result has been a burgeoning industry in the provision of pensions for directors and senior executives.

Mr Davies who died in June 1995, aged 57, is credited with salvaging the fortunes of

Bellwinch, the Wembley-based housebuilding group that was a casualty of the late Eighties property slump.

As revealed by *The Times*, Bellwinch is now suing his widow to prevent her from claiming the £601,600 payout from her husband's top-up death-in-service benefits policy with Norwich Union. The cash has not been paid over to Mrs Davies and is being held by Norwich Union.

Bellwinch has also issued writs against the executors of Mr Davies' estate and may proceed against Sedgwick Noble Lowndes, the insurance broker that advised on the setting up of the policy in 1990 when Mr Davies joined Bellwinch.

In a writ issued earlier this month, Bellwinch, which paid the £10,194 a year premiums on the policy, says that it is

entitled to either all the money, or at least £364,000. The company explains in the writ that it took out the policy to give itself the money to provide death-in-service benefits above the Inland Revenue limit.

Bellwinch refuses to explain why it is taking this action against the widow of the man who salvaged its fortunes. It would not comment on speculation that it sees the cash as compensation for the loss of Mr Davies' special talents, treating the cash as if it were the proceeds of a keyman policy. Keyman insurance makes good the decline in sales and profits that can result from the demise of a key executive.

Sedgwick Noble Lowndes, also prefers not to comment, saying only that it intends to "defend itself if required to

do". However, one actuary who specialises in this type of benefit wondered if the action stemmed from a legal nicety.

He explains: "In its service agreement with Mr Davies, Bellwinch promised to pay death-in-service benefits to his widow. The policy was intended to provide it with the funds to pay these benefits."

"Although you would think that the obligation to pay out the money would end if his widow collected the policy proceeds, this might still leave the company with the legal requirement to pay the benefits. But that would still pose the question as to quite why it is proceeding in this way."

Mrs Davies' adviser, Beaufort Financial Planning, based in Bath, would confirm only that it had been instructed to advise her on the issues involved in her case.

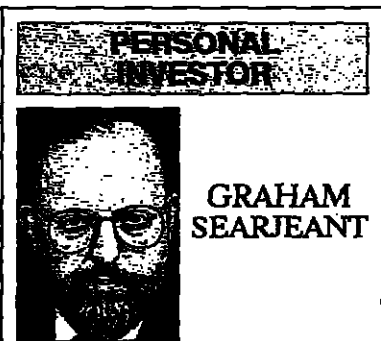
Felling the accounts jungle

One of the more obscure stories to reach the financial pages this week reported that the Accounting Standards Board had, in effect, withdrawn its 130-page draft *Statement of Principles for Financial Reporting* for a big rewrite. Sir David Tweedie, the board's chairman, admitted it "was not as clear on some issues as it might have been", arguing that even protesting accountants had missed the point.

Behind this internal spat, however, lie issues that will affect all who want to read accounts to find out what is going on. Sir David, having researched the subject in academic days, knows well that most small shareholders cannot understand big company accounts, and he dreams of eventual reform. Private investors see more company accounts than anyone else yet insiders no longer even pretend that many will have much joy reading them.

Most companies with the biggest share registers already avail themselves of a legal provision, thoughtfully provided by the Government, to send out only a form of summary financial statement, unless shareholders demand their dues. These summaries lag way behind developments in the full accounts, though experience of presenting them clearly should help to guide reform.

Reforms would end up much better if the needs of ordinary private individuals were put first rather than last. There is an assumption that professional fund managers make their investment decisions coolly on detailed analysis of the figures while small investors back fashion, hunches (such as liking



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

the product) or, at best, advice from cool professionals. Reality is less simple.

Many years ago, I asked the most successful unit trust manager of the day his secret. "What I really want to know," he explained sagely, "is whether the managing director has a happy home life." You won't find that in company accounts, though you might find it in the newspapers.

Quite different factors can influence professionals. Shares in BTR, one of Britain's top stocks, have just fallen a quarter without any dramatic change in financial data. Sentiment changed after the founding fathers' departure.

At the heart of that obscure accounting upset is what balance sheets are meant to show. Not a lot, argues Ernst & Young, the accountancy firm most opposed to the board's ideas. Years of high inflation made nonsense of accounting for assets at cost, so concentrate on profits and make the balance sheet fit. Private investors do not expect bal-

ance sheets to be an accounting dustbin. Ideally, they should give a fair idea of a share's asset backing and the capital employed in the business. That will remain only an ideal, but reforms should all move in that direction. In particular, the board's impending plan to account for mind-boggling complex financial derivatives should keep small investors in mind. Meanwhile, professionals claim they pay far more attention to new, clearer cashflow statements than to balance sheets. Yet "meaningless" balance sheets feature in summary statements sent to millions of small investors, while cash flow does not.

E&Y's Allister Wilson is right, however, to say that so much data and verbiage is being stuffed into annual reports that "users of these accounts will not be able to see the woods for the trees". And he means professionals.

Accountants are partly to blame for creating volumes more information in notes, new concepts such as the statement of recognised gains and losses and tedious get-out clauses applied to auditors' opinions. Legislators have added more. Companies themselves have made things worse by adding statements from chief executives, finance directors, chairmen of remuneration committees and the like. Few are for shareholders' benefit. Annual reports need thorough rationalisation to fit new material into a readable structure, hack out standard-form verbiage, do away with repetition and become fit for all. Small investors would be the best guides for the task.

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On the Crest of paperless shares

From Monday, those lovely share certificates with the copperplate writing will be phased out as the Stock Exchange shifts gears into the electronic age with the introduction of Crest, the new automated paperless settlement system.

For private investors holding share certificates, the change means giving some thought to any certificates that may have been left languishing in a drawer. While it is possible to do nothing, and to continue to hold pieces of paper in a paperless world, it may not be advisable. It is not that the system will suddenly discriminate against traditional share certificate holders, but from Monday most advantages will be in the hands of the electronic shareholder.

Should I get out of paper?

The answer will depend partly on how active you are as an investor. If you do not plan to buy any more shares, making the change may be a waste of time. If you plan to do a lot of buying and selling, you will almost certainly want to get out of paper.

The main reason for shifting is speed. Crest is designed to reduce the five-day rolling settlement period, first to three days and, ultimately, to the same day to allow for real-time settlement. From April, when the system comes entirely into its own, those with share certificates will almost certainly have to wait longer to receive their money when they sell shares. As Crest becomes more established, small shareholders may find that their settlement dates drag out to ten days or longer.

In addition, brokers are likely to give preferential treatment to electronic customers. Share certificate holders are unlikely to see their dealing costs rise immediately, but, in the long term, they may find that they are paying more than their electronic counterparts. In some cases, it may be a matter of not receiving the more attractive rates. ShareLink, for example, will not raise prices for share certificate owners, but those holding nominee accounts will have lower costs.

How do I make the change?

If you decide to switch from trading with share certificates, you will either need to become a sponsored member of Crest or set up a nominee account. For most private investors, a nominee account — either pooled or designated — is the answer. With a nominee account, you essentially transfer the legal ownership of

Karen Zagor on whether you should switch from trading with certificates and join the electronic age

your shares to the nominee, usually a bank, broker or institution. You remain the beneficial owner. With a pooled account, your stake is held in an account with the shares of other investors in the company and your name no longer appears on the share register. A designated account can be held in your name. Your name or the account number will appear with the broker's on the company share register.

If you decide to open a nominee account, look for one that suits your needs. If you make a few trades a year and are not interested in receiving advice from a broker, an execution-only account may be best. Look for an account that offers regular statements, consolidated tax certificates, company reports and retains shareholder perks.

If you decide to become a sponsored member, you remain the registered shareholder while the broker acts as your sponsor. This means that you do not need to make special arrangements to retain your perks and annual reports. The cost, however, is likely to be higher than holding share certificates or having a nominee account. While some brokers have waived the fees on these accounts, some are charging £30 to £100 a year. Fiona Hulme, customer services director at ShareLink, suggests would-be sponsored members wait until the transition period ends in April to open an account, since a sponsored member account can only hold Crest stock.

What are the disadvantages?

Once you give up holding certificates, you may also forfeit certain rights. You will no longer automatically receive shareholder perks, nor automatically be invited to meetings, get details of rights issues or receive company reports. In addition, not all nominees pass on dividends as soon as

they are paid. Some brokers also charge to collect dividends. There are nominee accounts that pass on all the shareholder benefits, so if these are important to you then search them out. A few companies, such as F&O, do not pass on share perks to anyone in a nominee account.

How much will a nominee account cost?

Fidelity does not charge for setting up a designated nominee account, which includes sending out statements of holdings every six months. There is, however, a charge of £20 per security when you move holdings out of the account. Fidelity says the charge is standard for the industry. Fidelity's normal commission charge is £25 on deals up to £2,500. If you do more than 25 deals a year, you can get lower rates through Fidelity's active trader account, where charges start at £15 for deals of up to £1,500. ShareLink charges £6 a quarter to administer its Market-Master account. Dealing costs start at 1 per cent, with a minimum of £10, on the first £2,500.

What if I want to sell shares before next April?

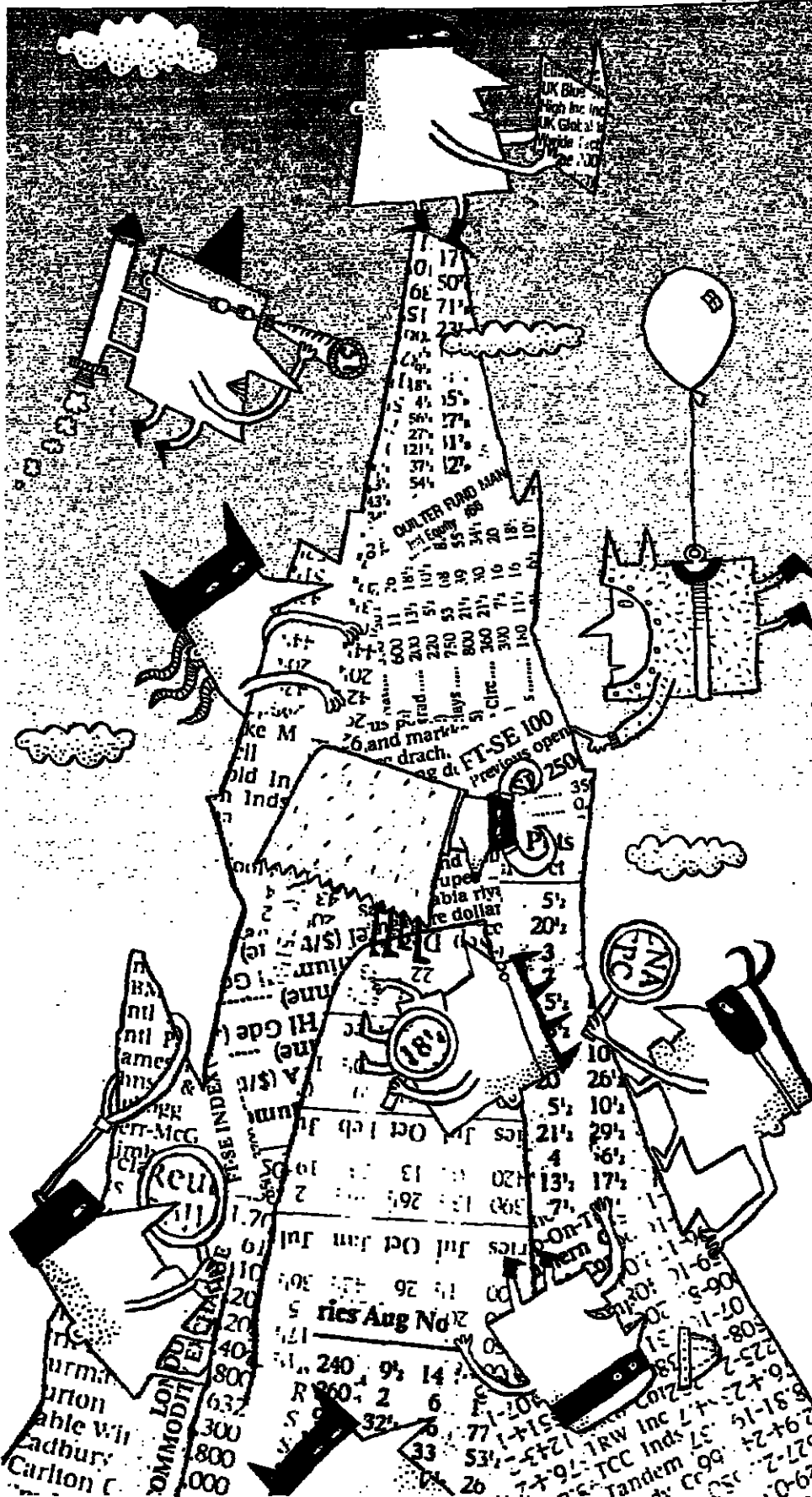
While Crest is being phased in, it will run in tandem with Talisman, the existing stock settlement system. In some cases, your Talisman transfer forms will be acceptable, but eventually you will need a Crest transfer form. It is best to find out which form you need before you make the sale.

How do I receive a stock certificate if I buy shares now?

Once "dematerialisation" occurs next month, share certificates will no longer be delivered to the market. You will no longer be issued with certificates automatically, but you can request one from your broker when you buy.

How safe are electronic shares?

Crest believes its system is secure, but if anyone does hack into the computer and steal your shares, it will pay up to £50,000 in compensation. If it can be proved that security was inadequate, at present, nominee plans are not covered automatically by the Investors Compensation Scheme. It is important, therefore, to check whether the nominee company is controlled by the broker, if it is dedicated solely to holding investments and if the broker is accepting the same responsibility for the nominee that it accepts for itself.



How to read the prices page

Understanding share price tables can be like grappling with a foreign language. Highs and lows, pluses and minuses, percentage yields and price/earnings (PE) ratios appear atop each column of shares on the Times equity prices page. But what do they mean?

Most people check to see the price on the day. But it is better to look at the columns on either side. On the left (High/Low) are listed the highest and lowest prices a share has reached this year. They give you some perspective to balance the terse message of the fifth column, just right of the share price, which shows the daily rise or fall (+/-). So even if Baggies PLC has fallen sharply on the day, it may be coming off the boil after soaring through the year. Alternatively, a seemingly spectacular jump may in reality be a modest climb out of the chasm.

But for a more revealing look behind the scenes turn to the two columns on the far right showing company share ratings — their yield and PE ratios.

Ordinary dividends are declared net of 20 per cent tax these days, so to calculate the income yield on a share you first have to multiply that by five

over four. Thus an 8p dividend becomes 10p gross. You then multiply the grossed-up dividend by 100 and divide by the market price. So if a share's gross dividend is 10p and its market price is 200p, its yield works out at 5 per cent. A share's yield changes every time its price changes. It also moves when a company raises or lowers its dividend.

A high yield is usually most relevant to those aiming to maximise current income rather than seeking long-term capital growth. But if income is not a priority, low-yielding stocks are potential winners since they often indicate companies ploughing back rather than distributing their profits, building up more for shareholders tomorrow.

Moreover, a high yield may imply that a company with low expectations of long-term profits growth is offering investors an attractive income now to compensate for stagnant returns expected later. If you need investment income immediately this should not worry you,

but beware if you are in for the long haul. More ominously, a high yield may be an inducement to keep punters locked in to a high-risk stock — the company then is effectively paying its shareholders a risk premium. Yield to new investors automatically falls when a share price rises, unless and until the company raises dividends in response. But since a higher market price increases a share's capital value, more shareholders may be attracted by the hope of further price rises, even at a lower yield. Conversely, a fall in the share price will raise yield unless the company cuts its dividend. But companies often placate investors with a stable — or even enhanced — dividend to offset reduced capital value.

Sometimes share prices are described as ex-dividend (marked with a cross in The Times). This means that new buyers do not qualify for any recently announced dividends.

The trouble with using yield as a

yardstick for judging a share's performance is that companies are free to choose how much of their profits they pay out in dividends. So yield is hardly a reliable measure for comparing one company with another. This is where a share's PE ratio comes in. It shows how highly the market — other investors — values the profits the company produces. You calculate a PE ratio by dividing earnings per share into the share's market price. So if your shares in Baggies each earn 32p and are priced at 300p, they are on a PE ratio of 9.2 (32 into 300). Naturally, PE ratios depend on changes in the number of shares in issue as well as the size of the earnings cake.

Put simply, the higher the PE the dearer the shares and vice versa. A high PE is often the sign of a growth stock, for which investors will pay more today, anticipating capital growth and higher earnings and dividends tomorrow.

Conversely, a low PE usually sug-

gests a company perceived as having a static profits outlook or a higher-risk profile, hence cheaper shares. But to complicate matters, even a company that has seen a sharp drop in profits and earnings may command a high PE if the market, confident of a quick earnings recovery, supports the share price. Artificially, yields and PE ratios move in opposite directions when prices change. According to Justin Urquhart Stewart of Barclays Stockbrokers, a high yield and low PE "signifies abnormally low growth expectations and bearish investor sentiment".

British Gas, for example, has one of the highest yields and lowest PE ratios in the oil and gas sector, largely because predatory price regulation is sapping investor confidence. Low yield and high PE usually indicate market bullishness.

So a simple share price alone does not tell half the story. What might appear cheap may be poor value for money and vice versa. The secret is to find a bargain at a reasonable PE ratio offering a reasonable yield. But even with a talented broker, that is easier said than done.

DAVID RUDNICK

Sweeteners for those attracted to power

In spite of the news that two power stations being sold off have been shut down for safety repairs, the Government appears to have pulled off a conjuring-trick with the sale of British Energy. Investors remained calm this week when told reactors at Humberston B in Scotland and Hinkley Point B in Somerset were being shut down for two weeks to investigate cracks in pipes. The news came too late for them to cancel their applications.

Such was the demand for shares from private investors in the run-up to the sale that the retail allocation will be increased to at least 30 per cent of the offer from the 30 per cent originally allotted to small investors. By the deadline on Wednesday, 600,000 retail investors had applied for 440 million shares, 30,000 fewer than the number who applied for Railtrack shares.

When the sale of the UK's nuclear power industry was first mooted, it seemed it would be an impossible task. Unfashionable and at odds with an increasingly strong environmental lobby, the power stations were deemed to be a privatisation too far. No political party has any commitment to build new power stations and those in existence will eventually have to be decommissioned.

However, everything has its price. The initial scepticism has been almost entirely assuaged by keeping the sale to the eight most modern reactors and by offering private investors a range of sweeteners. British Energy will also be priced attractively — as stockbrokers put it "priced to go".

The company is expected to be priced at between 180p and 280p. A lower price would bring the Government about £1.26 billion, less than half the £2.6 billion it had originally hoped and less than the £2.9 billion it cost to build the Sizewell B nuclear generator. The shares are being sold on a partly-paid basis. Private investors will initially pay 100p per share, a 5p discount on the institutional offer. Analysts believe that it is a good short-term bet — perhaps only for one year — but could be risky over the longer term.

The most attractive aspect of the sell-off for many, particularly PEP investors, will be the yield, which is expected to be between 7 and 9 per cent. The company is paying out a dividend worth £96 million in the first year, twice its anticipated first-year profits. The dividend will be distributed in two stages. The first part — 4.6p — will be paid out in January, while the second — 9.1p — will be paid in January of the next year.

The company is deemed to be a good cash cow. The structure of the power generation industry in Britain means that unlike the other two generating companies, National Power and PowerGen, British Energy always has a buyer for all of its power. The nuclear generator's profits, however, will be almost entirely reliant on the electricity pool price. An increasing dividend policy can be achieved only if the pool price stays at about 2.39p per kilowatt hour. A recent report from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, based on information from PowerGen and National Power, claims that the electricity pool price could fall below 2p per kilowatt hour.

PowerGen and National Power, unlike British Energy, have an input into setting the pool price. A fall of just 0.1p will cut an estimated £61 million off the company's profitability. This could make a considerable dent in the £200 million annual profits British Energy hopes to make by the end of century.

Other factors that have a big impact on long-term profitability are the costs of reprocessing fuel and decommissioning the stations. British Energy has included estimates of these costs in its profit forecasts, but the figures are contested by Friends of the Earth and the Labour Party. Another factor is the possibility of a change of government. Labour is almost certain to increase utility regulation.

The total discount for private investors represents a saving of £15 on 300 shares — the minimum application. Private investors will also be offered a 10p discount on the second instalment or a one share for 15 bonus.

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3 M Surname (Mr Mrs Miss Ms)
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Postcode Date of Birth DAY MONTH YEAR

4 I accept the purchase will be subject to the terms of the current Prospectus.
Signature Date

5 If buying for a child under 16, give name of parent/guardian:
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All forenames
Address
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6 If buying for a (great) grandchild, give name of the parent/guardian above and your own name and address below.
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Pension providers will benefit again

No one could deny that pensions, a sector where English is anything but plain, need to be made more simple. The labyrinthine complexities of the system are a disincentive to save.

However, the motives of some members of the simplification movement are open to question. For they stand to benefit from the sweeping away of rules that deter the public from making provision for old age.

The Prudential, the leading light of the Simplifying Pensions Group, is not a disinterested observer. In the past, the company has profited from pension intricacies.

Customers paid their contributions, from which the Pru, like the rest of the industry, took more than its fair share of charges and commissions, sure in the knowledge that no one would understand enough to question the deduc-



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

tions. Now pension sales are falling, the Pru has decided that self-restraint would be a better strategy.

In its defence, the Pru protests that charges would be lower if pensions were more straightforward. But if this is so, why did the company not support reform in the late Eighties when millions jumped into high-charge personal pensions?

For these policyholders, simplification has come too late. That is, of course, unless the Pru cares now to demonstrate its commitment to the

simplification cause by reducing the above average charges on its existing plans.

As part of its grand design, the simplification squad proposes that pensions be extended to those without paid employment, giving housewives and househusbands a chance to invest for retirement.

Again, this is an admirable aim. But relaxing the rules would be of most advantage to the wives of wealthy men in households already awash with retirement savings.

Homemakers of more modest means would either

be unable to afford to pay into a pension or be able to spare so little that their contributions would be eaten away by even the most reduced insurance company charges.

If simplification is to succeed it should cover the state schemes. As we report on page 34, failure to tick a box on a convoluted form lost one woman close to £6,000 in the state pension. But bureaucratic muddle means that her situation cannot be remedied.

All very taxing

SIMPLIFICATION is also the newly adopted motto at the Inland Revenue's beleaguered self-assessment HQ. As it prepares to announce its latest pilot study results, the Revenue is keen to assure us that the nation is ready to cope with the new income tax system. Strangely, however, accountants who have everything to gain from fiscal

complexities, beg to disagree. They are also beginning to point out that the burden on industry of the new income tax system will be greater than earlier believed.

Companies must assume the task of calculating the taxable value of their employees' expenses. This was previously the responsibility of the Revenue, whose life is being made simpler at the expense of business.

This week, in a piece of good news that has surely not escaped the Chancellor, it has emerged that self-assessment could provide a useful boost to the public sector borrowing requirement. The automatic fines that will be levied on those slow to submit their 100-page forms could amount to £180 million. This is equivalent to a tenth of a penny on income tax. Dilatory taxpayers may find that they are helping to fund Budget tax cuts.

South Africa can reward a careful investment

Direct investment in South Africa is almost certain to increase after President Mandela's visit to the UK. John Major has already pledged a further £60 million of aid to the country to pay for education and health, and to invest in small companies.

An audience of 400 businessmen representing the cream of British industry listened to the President's speech at the CBI conference earlier this week. They appear to have also been persuaded about the potential in the new South Africa. One observer, Hilary Wakefield, a fund manager with the South African company Old Mutual, was particularly impressed with the way the President had managed to shed some of the socialist rhetoric that was instrumental in bringing him to power. No mention was made of increased minimum wages, full employment and redistribution of wealth. Instead the President spoke of wage moderation and announced a £26

billion privatisation programme involving the sale of the country's telecommunications, businesses, airlines and utilities.

Mr Wakefield said some of the President's entourage were not finding it quite as easy to speak about privatisations as Mr Mandela. Mr Wakefield said: "The reaction to the speech depended on whether you thought the bottle was half empty or half full. South Africans were impressed in how far the President had come, whereas others, such as myself, feel there is still a long way to go."

Old Mutual is one of only three fund managers offering unit trusts or investment trusts entirely devoted to companies in South Africa.

In spite of the tremendous wave of confidence and optimism inspired by the President, anyone wishing to invest should do so with a degree of caution. The economy is still far from stable, and like any other emerging market, prone to great volatility. For exam-



President Mandela has brought a tremendous wave of confidence and optimism

ple, Old Mutual's South Africa investment trust is down 13 per cent over three months, down 12 per cent over six months, but up 7 per cent over one year. Credit Suisse's trust is down about 14 per cent over three and six months and up 10 per cent over one year. Save & Prosper's South African fund is down 16 per cent over three and six months, and up 0.36 per cent over the year.

The poor performance of the last six months is in contrast to the good performance of the previous 12 months. South Africa was the best performing emerging market of 1995, mainly because many of the global emerging market index-tracking funds had to buy shares because the country became part of the emerging market index for the first time.

Mr Wakefield feels that while the macroeconomic picture may not be that certain — the country has a huge budget deficit, and a rapidly devaluing currency — value could be found by careful stock selection. Foreign capital is also sensitive to the health of the 78-year-old President. At least part of the fall in the market over the past six months was linked to fears about a successor. Mr Mandela's move to name an heir apparent should help.

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Legal & General

How to make the most of your investments

Marianne Curphey finds that careful planning can boost income

With interest rates currently as slim as supermodels, trying to squeeze income out of modest savings is pretty tough.

Only the most aggressive investors will be able to make a 10 per cent return on a sum of less than £10,000 at present, and such a strategy is risky because it will involve weighing a portfolio heavily in favour of equities, where returns are never guaranteed.

However, with a little reorganisation and some attention to the implications of tax allowances, it is possible to set up investments that will give you a steady return. The secret is to ensure that while you enjoy the income, you protect your capital from being eroded.

Weekend Money has looked at three examples where simple reorganisation of savings could net you hundreds of pounds extra income a year.



Young people saving for a house deposit could opt for zero dividend preference shares

A young couple are saving to put down a deposit on a house in two years' time.

Mark Bolland of Chamberlain de Broe, an independent financial adviser, says: "Equities are too risky if you will need to get your money back at the end of the two years. A bit of bad luck might mean the market fell just when you needed to cash in your stocks. This could wipe a lot off your capital growth."

"Cash is safer, but for the

slightly more adventurous I would suggest zero dividend preference shares from an investment trust that winds up in two years' time. You know the price in the market when you buy and you know what the redemption price should be. These investments should be relatively secure and give annual capital growth of up to 7 per cent. Unit trust savings plans are good for the longer term, but if the market bombs out you might be left with investments worth a lot less

than the price at which you bought them."

Moneyfacts, which analyses bank and building society saving and borrowing rates every week, has come up with a best-buy instant access account from the Portman Building Society. It is currently paying 4.8 per cent on balances of £100 and above.

For more information, consult the Money Information Service on page 40 of Weekend Money.

MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE

A middle-aged couple are looking for a 10 per cent return on a lump sum of £30,000.

Mark Bolland says: "They should keep £5,000 in cash for emergencies, and put £3,000 in a tax-exempt special savings account. That guarantees them return on capital plus some interest. They are allowed to withdraw the interest from the Tessa net of tax during the plan's five-year."

"Next they should take advantage of personal equity plans: invest in good quality blue chip stocks like Shell, Glaxo, stocks in the FT-SE 30 index, for a single company PEP. Even companies like BT could be worth buying for the yield if the share price falls again. The share price of any of these stocks may go up or down, but they tend to pay out reliable dividends of around 4-5 per cent, since this is what keeps investors happy. Shares in a PEP are sheltered from tax, which makes the dividend

worth around 8 per cent to a higher rate taxpayer."

A good-buy general PEP is currently the Dunedin Income Growth investment trust, which is trading at a 13 per cent discount to the market and which invests in companies with good dividend track records. Check the management fees of managed and self-select PEPs before you buy them."

Moneyfacts' best buy for investors opening a Tessa for the first time is from the Sun Banking Corporation which has a fixed interest rate of 7.5 per cent. Investors need to invest a lump sum of £8,575 to open the account. In the first year £3,000 is invested and interest accumulated is tax free. The remainder stays in a feeder account earning 7.5 per cent, and is transferred over the five years of the plan.

Other new Tessas with competitive interest rates are available from NatWest Bank, Birmingham Midshires, and the Principality Building Society.



The middle aged should consider Tessas and Peps

RETIRED COUPLE

A retired couple have £10,000 to invest for growth.

Mark Bolland says: "The ideal portfolio would be £2,000 in cash in a fixed interest or postal account, plus £3,000 to start a Tessa. Next, another £2,000 in gilts, but make sure you buy them at the right time. If interest rates rise, as some commentators believe, then gilt yields will fall. In addition, although gilts give you a fixed return, they erode your capital sum and to rebuild this you will need a more aggressive equity investment. For a five-

year view you could put £2,000 in a non-income investment trust in Japan or the Far East, which you hope would give you growth to recover the capital lost in gilts. This couple wants high yield and so need to be more aggressive than a small investor might normally be."

Mr Bolland also recommends a husband who is taxed on earned income or pension transfer some assets to his wife if she is a basic rate taxpayer or non-taxpayer. Only people buying and selling assets worth more than £6,300 are liable to pay capital gains tax, and people over

65 get an extra £1,145 annually above the personal tax allowance of £3,765. He says National Savings are tax-efficient and secure, although unexciting.

The current 43rd Issue Certificate is paying 5.35 per cent gross interest free of tax on lump sums of between £100 and £10,000 invested for five years. Other National Savings bonds pay higher interest rates, but the interest is taxed. Income Bonds pay 6.25 per cent gross on sums above £2,000, and Pensioners Bonds 7 per cent on sums between £500 and £50,000.



Retired couples seeking high yields will need to be more aggressive than a small investor might normally be

No go for the PIA ombudsman

Life insurers and investment companies are challenging disgruntled policyholders to take them to court, rather than agreeing to allow an independent ombudsman to handle the case at no cost to the investor.

Those forced to pursue their claim through the courts could face large legal bills if they lose their case.

The Personal Investment Authority (PIA), which regulates firms selling investments to the public, this week published a list of 17 companies that are still refusing to let the PIA's ombudsman or his counterpart, the insurance ombudsman, investigate complaints that are technically outside the PIA ombudsman's terms of reference. These include the administration of investments, the marketing, selling or administration of long-term care, permanent health insurance or term assurance and complaints dating back to before the Financial Services Act came into effect in April 1988. The vast majority of investment firms are happy to let the ombudsman investigate such cases on a voluntary basis.

The companies still holding out are Aegon Life, American Life, Black Sea and

Sara McConnell on 17 companies forcing policyholders to go through the courts

Baltic General Insurance, Century Life, Co-operative Insurance Society, Criterion Life, Crown Life, Eurolife, Life Insurance Corporation of India, Old Mutual Life, Premium Life, Scottish Equitable (Managed Funds), Scottish Life Pensions Annuity Company, S-E-Bank Life Assurance, Stalwart Assurance, Suffolk Life Annuities and Windsor Life.

Stephen Edell, the PIA ombudsman, says he is powerless to force the companies to fall into line. "Negotiations with the PIA are continuing. But the ombudsman's bureau can only try and persuade. It cannot demand."

The companies argue that they are justified with their own handling of complaints and do not need a third party to intervene. They also object to having a

fee of £500 per case investigated, regardless of whether they win or lose. John Deane, client services director at Century Life, said: "We want to deal with complaints ourselves. We don't see significant value in an independent third party. We look at complaints independently. We take note of the ombudsman's findings in other companies' cases." He added: "We would hope clients are confident in our complaints procedures."

The two cases that went to court both went in favour of the company, said Mr Deane. Century, reviews its position regularly, but is not yet convinced that it should allow Mr Edell to investigate a wider range of complaints.

John Wybrew, managing director of Windsor Life, which merged with Crown last year, said: "We haven't felt comfortable enough with the activities of the ombudsman's bureau. We felt there was a strong leaning in favour of the client. We are bending over backwards to settle complaints."

Premium Life said it had recently been taken over by Hambro Assured and the ombudsman would be able to investigate the whole range of complaints.

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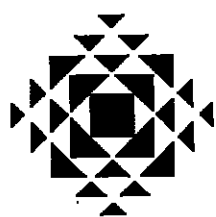
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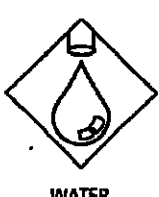
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Caroline Merrell on the latest revamp of the self-assessment form

Revenue tries again to aid confused taxpayers

The Inland Revenue will next week publish the full results of a pilot study examining the public's adeptness at dealing with the new form for self-assessment of tax.

The results are likely to show that some are still baffled by aspects of the new system. The survey's findings have already prompted the Revenue to draft the form for the third time.

The first version, which was tried out on a group of volunteers in Leicester, was erroneously filled in by about a third of those surveyed. Some claimed that it was too long and had too many sections.

The Revenue has already reduced the number of schedules within the form from 12 to eight, in the interests of simplification. But the final version, which will be made public at the start of next month, is likely to try to simplify things even further.

For the millions of people affected by self-assessment, the much-heralded revolution in tax affairs has now started. Anyone who is self-employed, a company director, partner, pensioner or has complicated tax affairs should now be making sure that they are keeping the documentation that will allow them to fill in the form correctly.

The revamped forms will be sent to nine million - or one in three - taxpayers next April. They will relate to the 1996 to 1997 tax year. Taxpayers are expected to complete it by the end of September 1997, but have until January 31, 1998, before any penalties can be applied.

Unlike the old system, these penalties will be automatic. Returns not filed by January



Distort the figures and face a £3,000 Revenue fine

31, 1998 will invoke an automatic £100 penalty. Those still outstanding six months later will incur a further £100 fine. The Revenue also has the right to impose an extra penalty of £60 a day. At present, interest is payable on any payments overdue on January 31. But under the new regime, there will also be the threat of a 5 per cent surcharge on any tax unpaid by the end of February.

The final weapon in the Inland Revenue's armoury against dilatory taxpayers is

the threat of a £3,000 fine. However, it claims that this punishment will be meted out only to those who are believed to be falsifying their accounts or destroying their records.

At a seminar on self-assessment last week, Ernst & Young, the firm of accountants, gave a warning that the new regime was likely to be fraught with problems. Phil Davis, Ernst & Young partner, said he believed about 20 per cent of those moving to self-assessment could fail to fill in their

tax return adequately. He said: "The Revenue stands to raise another £180 million through levying extra fines."

He said that the tax rules governing expenses and income were still very confusing, and many were likely to struggle to fill in the form correctly.

"Pensioners, in particular, may find it difficult to judge what is taxable income," he said. However, the Revenue pointed out that it had been particularly encouraged by pensioners' ability to deal with the form.

At the seminar, Ernst & Young pointed out that the majority of the coverage surrounding self-assessment had centred on the self-employed, who are used to filling in their tax returns or dealing with an accountant.

The accountancy firm believes that the burden of the new system on employers who have pay-as-you-earn employees affected by self-assessment could be great.

The biggest change for employers will be that they will have to calculate the taxable value of any extra benefits received by employees - this could include company cars, medical insurance, as well as expenses. This task was carried out by the Revenue. Some have estimated that the cost to companies of self-assessment could reach £300 million.

Michael Katz, employee services partner, said: "Any advantage is totally overwhelmed by the huge burden to the employer of having to calculate the taxable value of all benefits. For employers to work all this out by July 6 and face heavy penalties if they get it wrong is incredibly difficult. Taxable benefits are a minefield for the uninitiated."

One in three taxpayers will be sent the new forms

Merger mania bonuses

Last week's announcement by Pearl that it intended to distribute £1 billion of its orphan assets to policyholders in the form of a special bonus has once again thrown the spotlight on take-over and merger activity in the life insurance sector.

Legal & General has already announced plans to distribute orphan assets to policyholders and last month Prudential announced it was consulting the Department of Trade and Industry about carrying out a similar exercise.

The amount of money each Pearl policyholder will receive depends on the type and duration of the policy.

For example, a 25-year endowment policy started in 1975 with a sum assured of £6,000 will get an extra £246 added to its value this year.

Other life insurers believed

to be in consultation with the DTI about giving their policyholders a bonus include Britannic and Wesleyan.

Securitized Endowment Contracts (SEC), an independent financial adviser, specialising in the second-hand endowment contract market, has drawn up a hit list of companies that could be in line to demutualise, be taken over or distribute orphan assets.

SEC pinpoints the Co-operative Insurance Society, Equitable Life, Norwich Union, Scottish Widows, Standard Life and Sun Life of Canada as the most likely to float. Norwich Union has admitted it was considering a change of strategy, and conversion to float on the stock market could be one such option. Any flotation could bring bonuses to policyholders.

SEC believes that Friends

Provident, Guardian, London & Manchester, MGM Assurance, National Mutual, NPI, Scottish Amicable, Scottish Life, and Scottish Provident could all be takeover targets.

Friends Provident was in talks with the Prudential about a takeover and is believed to be talking to other companies. Again, a takeover could bring benefits to existing policyholders in the form of a special bonus. For example, when General Accident took over Provident Mutual, the latter's with-profits policyholders benefited from a payout.

Finally, in SEC's hit list are those companies it believes are in a position to distribute orphan assets in the form of a bonus to existing policyholders. These companies include Refuge, Royal London and Wesleyan.

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Peps avoid anniversary blues

Helen Pridham
finds corporate
bond Peps have
done well in
their first year

Since their launch a year ago, corporate bond personal equity plans have achieved a substantial following among investors. The unit trust industry alone has attracted more than £1.3 billion into these products, which offer a high level of tax-free income coupled with relative stability of capital, plus flexibility. Yields of more than 8 per cent are currently available on some funds, although these yields are not always what they seem.

When corporate bond Peps were first launched last July, it looked as though they might turn out to be something of a damp squib. In spite of more than a dozen plans being available and considerable marketing hype, sales were slow initially.

Rachael Medill, of M&G, one of the first unit trust companies to launch this type of Pep, said: "Many people thought that a wall of money would immediately pour out of building societies into corporate bond Peps. We were not in that category. We believed it would take longer to persuade investors of the merits of making the transition."

By the turn of the year, the number of plans available had swollen and, with the end of the tax year approaching, sales picked up. More money flowed into corporate bond Peps in the first three months of this year than in the previous six. Surplus cash from maturing Tessa's also boosted sales.

Banks and building societies with their own unit trust arms have been in the best position to cater for any investors considering alternatives to cash accounts. Indeed, by the end of the tax year it was Barclays that had achieved the highest sales with the Woolwich not far behind. Barclays had the advantage of an existing unit trust specialising in gilts and corporate bonds, which it was already selling to customers who sought financial advice.

But according to Paul Ashby, marketing manager, sales through Peps over the past year have been about 50 per cent higher than expected. He said: "Most of the business has come from the bank's own customers, but there has been more



business than usual from direct investors and through financial advisers. We believe the size, track record and the Barclays brand name were comfort factors, especially for first-time Pep investors who made up over 60 per cent of investors in our bond Pep."

The Woolwich timed the introduction of its corporate bond Pep to coincide with the first wave of Tessa maturities. The fund was up and running on January 1 and was offered to each of the society's Tessa investors as a potential home for the interest they could not roll over into Tessa Mark II. David Holcroft, managing director, said: "Our research indicated that Tessa investors and corporate bond Pep investors have a similar profile. For example, both are interested in long-term, tax-saving investments."

The success of the Woolwich's campaign was indicated by the fact that about a third of its investors have put in £3,000 — which is roughly equivalent to the maximum interest from a Tessa — a further third have topped up to the full £6,000 general Pep allowance. Nearly all, says Mr Holcroft, are first-time Pep investors. Financial advisers still have mixed feelings about corporate bond Peps. Many are particu-

larly frustrated that the unit trust industry has not agreed a standard basis for quoting or calculating the yields on these funds. In spite of the lead given by M&G last year and a campaign by the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (Autif) to get managers to quote redemption yields as well as running yields on their funds, no agreement was reached. Most managers still quote only a running yield that simply reflects the level of income being produced by the bonds and other assets in the trust. Finding out the redemption yield is not so easy. But it can be vital because it takes into account any potential capital losses or gains when the bonds are redeemed if they have been purchased for more or less than their redemption price.

Jason Hollands, of Best Investment, said: "The redemption yield illustrates the total return. Our worry is that people won't get the returns they expect if they compare trusts on their income yields alone."

Amanda Crowley, of the Allenbridge Group, points out that even armed with the redemption yield, investors cannot be sure they are comparing like with like. "The

problem is that there is still no uniform way of calculating redemption yields. Autif is working on some rules, but progress is very slow."

Another snag that makes comparisons difficult is that some fund managers quote yields before taking out annual charges and some after. Also some take annual charges out of capital rather than income, which boosts the income yield but can lead to capital erosion. Corporate bond Peps where charges are taken out of capital include Aburust Fixed Interest, Britannia Extra Income PEP, GT High Yield, and Invesco High Income.

However, major corporate bond Pep providers report that a significant proportion of investors are not taking the income. At Barclays, 45 per cent are opting to let their income accumulate, at M&G about 50 per cent are doing so, while at Woolwich the percentage not taking income is as high as 80 per cent.

Mr Ashby admits to being surprised at the number opting for the roll-up option. He puts it down to impatience.

Corporate bond Peps are best suited as income vehicles for people who do not want to risk their money in the equity markets. But there are better options for long-term growth.

THE INVESTORS

INVESTORS who took the plunge into these Peps last year have enjoyed a pretty good year. Graham Hooper, of Chase de Vere, says: "Most investors have not only enjoyed a considerably better income than they would have got from a building society account, but they have also enjoyed sufficient capital gains to recoup any initial charges. However, it has been a very positive climate for bonds, with interest rates falling gently. It seems unlikely they will fall any further and over the next year or two interest rates could rise again, which would not be so favourable for bond funds." Clive Scott Hopkins, of Towry Law, the financial adviser, says: "Corporate bond Peps are ideal for elderly people in their seventies or eighties who need a high level of income. People in early retirement or younger would be much better off with equity income Peps, which will give them increasing returns."

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YIELDS OF TOP TEN BY FUND SIZE

	Fund size £m	Running yield %	Gross redemption yield %
Barclays Unicorn Income Manager	489	8.04	8.24
M&G Corporate Bond	314	7.66	7.46
TSB High Income	254	7.3	6.85
Woolwich Corporate Bond	137	7.19	7.08
Fidelity Moneybuilder Income	136	7.9	7.5
Clerical Medical Extra Income	88	7.8	7.68
Virgin Income	70	7.6	7.2
Sun Alliance Corporate Bond	69	6.92	6.82
Lloyds High Interest	66	7.86	7.86
NatWest Extra Income	55	7.7	7.2

Top 10 Corporate Bond Peps in the Gilt & Fixed Interest sector by fund size *no charges deducted

Source: Allenbridge Group



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and Sarah Jones checks out the winners and losers on charges

Tide turning against compulsory metering

Just as we were all starting to accept that water metering would become a fact of life, the Labour Party and consumer groups are trying to halt the tide. They say that although individuals may currently save money by switching to a meter, the long-term costs of metering will be astronomical for the country as a whole.

"Water metering is ultimately misguided. Water companies are under pressure to protect water supplies but relying on meters is the soft option," says Sharon Dee, senior researcher at the Consumers' Association.

Only 8 per cent of households currently have water meters but this figure will rise as most new properties are metered and water companies push for compulsory metering. Anglian Water, for example, has announced plans to meter 95 per cent of households by 2015. The Government has stepped back from advocating wholesale compulsory metering but openly supports voluntary metering as the best way to ensure sustainable levels of water usage.

Ian Byatt, Director-General of Ofwat, the industry regulator, has also not been shy in promoting water metering, and says it should be extended gradually into areas where resources would otherwise be under pressure.

However, the Consumers' Association says that Mr Byatt may be breaking the law by obstructing pilot tests on alternatives to charging for water. Ms Dee says: "Ofwat is stifling consumer choice by not exploring other ways of charging. In particular, there should be a pilot for bills based on council tax bands."

The CA also claims that unmetered customers are subsidising the introduction of meters. Metered water used to be more expensive than unmetered water but Ofwat has encouraged companies to bring the charges into line. In the process average metered water prices have fallen by 2 per cent but unmetered water costs have risen.

The Labour Party is campaigning against compulsory water metering. For a start, says Frank Dobson, the Shadow Environment Secretary, the costs of installing a metered system cannot be just-



Tony and Julie Yorke with son Harry. The cost of metered water has not been a shock

TONY AND JULIE Yorke moved into their current home in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, two years ago and, in common with all new houses, the water meter came with the territory.

"I was concerned at first because I had seen reports about how expensive meters can be, especially as with a new house we had to put down a lawn and that needed a lot watering. But, in fact, the bill wasn't a shock when it arrived," says Mrs Yorke, a public relations officer.

It is estimated that the total initial cost to the country could be as much as £4 billion. Furthermore, a metered system will impose an extra running cost of around £500 million every year, and water meters last for only ten years.

At the moment, while customers largely pay for installation, companies promise to replace meters free of charge, though the costs are passed on to customers generally in the form of bigger water bills.

Mr Dobson also believes that compulsory metering reduces the pressure on the water companies to cut back on leaks. He says: "The best way to protect the environment by saving water is for the companies to put their own pipes in order. Yet mandatory leakage targets have still not been introduced."

Most water bills are based on the rateable value of the

property. So, as a general rule of thumb, a small household in a high rateable value property should be better-off with a meter. But a large family in a low rateable value property will probably pay more with metering. Dishwashers and washing machines increase water consumption and taking a bath uses more than twice as much water as taking a shower, except if you have a power shower.

Even if you think you might save money (use our cost list right) with a meter, it may take a while to recoup the cost of having a meter installed. All water companies offer customers the option of having a meter but the price of installation ranges from nothing to £198. Some companies also charge for the initial survey.

Furthermore people living in flats may find they need expensive plumbing alterations. It is possible to install a meter yourself.

Once a meter is installed it will be read twice a year. Payment is made after the reading, not in advance as with unmetered water charges. The water and sewerage bill will consist of a standing charge and a charge based on how much water was used. Standing charges for meters have been higher than unmetered charges to reflect the cost of meter reading, but Ofwat has asked companies to reduce standing charges for metered customers.

"Basing water charges solely on the volume of water used does not make sense — the bulk of your water bill goes on the costs involved in maintaining or improving the system," says Ms Dee. "We urgently need an alternative method of paying for water that reflects the true costs."

THE COST

Step 1: Calculate your weekly water usage. Basic use is ten litres per person per day, toilet 9.5 litres per flush, washing machine 80 litres per load, bath 80 litres, shower 35 litres, power shower 90 litres, dishwasher 35 litres per load, hosepipe 270 litres for 30 minutes use. Multiply your total weekly usage by 52 and then divide by 1,000. This will give you the number of cubic metres of water your household uses each year. If you are under one of the ten big water companies you need to add the volume of sewage your household produces. This is equal to the total volume of water used.

Step 2: Find out the rateable value of your property. Your last water bill should tell you the "charge value". Round it to the nearest £100. Step 3: Now you need to compare your usage figure with the average company figure at your rateable value. The average figures for the water and sewerage companies are: £100 rate, 144 cubic metres; £200, 282; £300, 428; £400, 569. For water-only companies: £100 rate, 74 cubic metres; £200, 134; £300, 197; £400, 257. If your usage is more than this amount it should be cheaper to stick to rateable charges. If your usage is less than this amount you could save money by switching to a meter.

So if your annual water usage is 161 cubic metres and you are with a water-only company, you would stick with the current system if your home was valued at the £100 or £200 level, but switch to a meter if at the £300 or £400 level.

For more detailed calculations, see *Which?* magazine, July 1996.

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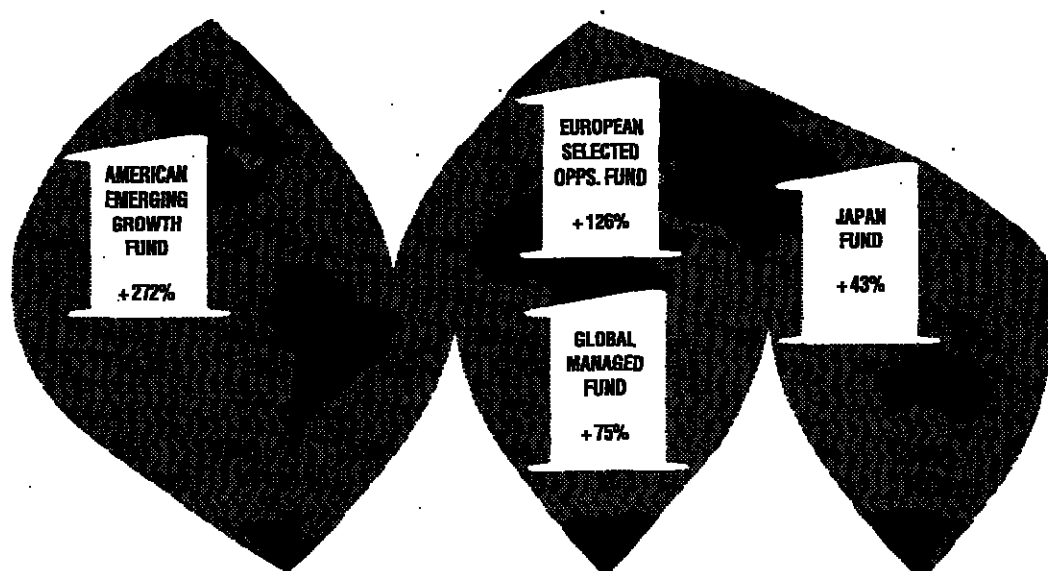
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There will be no National & Provincial after the takeover on August 5, no buzzy saver bees and no products

When N&P buzzes off

Decision time looms for the million or so National & Provincial savers losing their identity to Abbey National on August 5. Once they have received the free Abbey shares or cash to which they are entitled, they have a tough choice between closing their accounts or staying with the Abbey, and holding on to the shares or selling immediately.

There will be no N&P after August 5, no buzzy bees and no products. That means all N&P savings accounts will be transferred into the nearest equivalent at Abbey. Historically N&P savings rates have been higher than Abbey, but there have been attempts over the last six months to bring the two into line.

In January the rates on N&P's instant and 90-day accounts were at least 0.5 per cent higher: the children's account up to 0.75 per cent higher; and the Tessa between 0.15 and 0.6 per cent higher. Now the rates are all virtually the same, though the beneficiaries are Abbey, rather than N&P, savers.

There are better savings rates elsewhere. For instant access on a balance of £5,000, First Direct pays 3.5 per cent, the Portman 4.8 per cent and Alliance & Leicester 5.4 per cent — compared with Abbey's 2.9 per cent. For notice accounts on a balance of £5,000, Bradford & Bingley (60-day) pays 5.40 per cent, Chelsea (120-day) 6 per cent and Scarborough (100-day) 6.5 per cent — compared

Sarah Jones on
what to do as
D-Day for deal
with the Abbey
approaches



with Abbey's 90-day account giving 3.35 per cent. Children would be better off going to Barclays, the Scarborough or the Woolwich, among others. For first Tessa, Birmingham Midshires pays 7.25 per cent compared with Abbey's 5.8 per cent, and for follow-on Tessa they pay 7.25 per cent and 6.35 per cent respectively.

The N&P members who will do well out of the merger are borrowers. N&P has copied Abbey in recently lowering its variable mortgage rate after base rate cuts. The rate at both is 7.04 per cent (with effect from September 1 for existing borrowers). But N&P borrowers with large mortgages will also benefit from Abbey's tiering system. From September mortgages of £60,000 to £99,999 will be charged at 6.99 per cent, and those more than £100,000 at 6.94 per cent.

While credit cardholders will now have to pay an annual fee of £9.50 — there is no fee with the N&P Visa — the APR is 1.5 per cent lower with Abbey.

John Cully, head of corporate affairs at the Portman,

says: "There is a view among mutuals that once customers have taken their bonuses from a takeover or conversion, they will think about returning to a building society. Many customers like the idea of being a member of a building society rather than a shareholder in a bank. There has also been publicity about the relative returns on savings."

Savers of less than two years' standing and borrowers will receive £500 worth of free Abbey National shares. Savers of more than two years could choose to take £750 either in shares or cash — only 20 per cent opted for the shares. While Abbey is a blue-chip stock, there will be no repeat of the Abbey flotation bonanza by which shares started at 149p seven years ago and now stand at about 580p. They have already fallen from a high of 660p in January this year. So are they worth holding?

Peter Card, of Midland stockbrokers, says: "You do have to ask yourself if your money would be better off

employed elsewhere. Most analysts are positive about the company and you can get a decent income through the dividend. Yield is currently 4.8 per cent gross. But if you are not particularly interested or experienced in stocks and shares, you should think about selling. It makes no sense to put all your eggs in one basket, and you would be better off going into an investment trust."

For N&P members who decide to sell their shares, Abbey says it has set up no special service for August 5 but it is looking at a deal with ShareLink and will inform shareholders of any such service when it sends out the share certificates.

Analysts do not expect the share price to be badly affected by a rush to sell. "All the news relating to the deal is in the market and therefore in the price. There is nothing clever to be done," says Gareth Hayward of Waters Lunniss, the broker. "Sit with the shares and, above all, don't rush into anything."

Payments start on August 27 and should be received by September 2. Cash bonuses will go into an Abbey account, while those getting shares will be sent certificates. Bonuses from society mergers or conversions carry a capital gains tax liability. If your bonus and any other gains exceed £5,300 in this tax year you will need to tell the Inland Revenue. Shares are only liable to CGT when they are sold.

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Halifax Solid Gold (90 Day Notice)	3.05%	3.05%	3.35%	3.35%	4.10%	4.10%	4.60%	4.60%
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BOXING: DISQUALIFICATION OF POLE RESCUES FORMER WORLD CHAMPION BUT PROVOKES RIOT

Golota lowers Bowe's standing

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK

IT WAS the worst experience of Riddick Bowe's life. Nothing, even in the harsh days of his boyhood in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, could match the nightmare that engulfed him at Madison Square Garden on Thursday night.

He had to be rescued twice: once by the referee, Wayne Kelly, who, by disqualifying Andrew Golota, Bowe's opponent, saved him from receiving a severe beating; and then by his cornermen, who stopped him from being man-handled by angry supporters of Golota, who had stormed the ring immediately after the disqualification.

As a full-scale riot raged in the ring and in the body of the hall for half an hour, Bowe's corner had to form a protective ring around him, their hands shielding his head from flying bottles, to bundle him out.

He reached the safety of his dressing-room uninjured, but his reputation as the world's leading heavyweight was seriously damaged. He will never be allowed to live down the

the master of in-fighting, he was incapable of getting his heavy arms to go to work inside. He could not even conjure up an uppercut, his favourite punch, which had destroyed so many of his opponents, notably Jorge Gonzalez and Herbie Hide. All he could do was swing wildly in an attempt to land the big overhand right, but they either had no effect on Golota or they went wide of the target.

All the while Golota, not at all overawed by Bowe's reputation, kept out-jabbing him and out-boxing him, landing solid right hands on Bowe's chin. Once, in the third round, he had Bowe backing away stiffly in confusion.

By the sixth round, Bowe was beginning to look ragged and out of his stride, and more and more it began to look as if he would not be able to last the distance under Golota's continuous attack.

Golota was again penalised in the sixth round and it clearly began to dawn on Bowe that the only way to save himself was through a disqualification. However, Kelly was not yet ready to call a halt to the proceedings and Bowe had to grit his teeth and come out for the seventh.

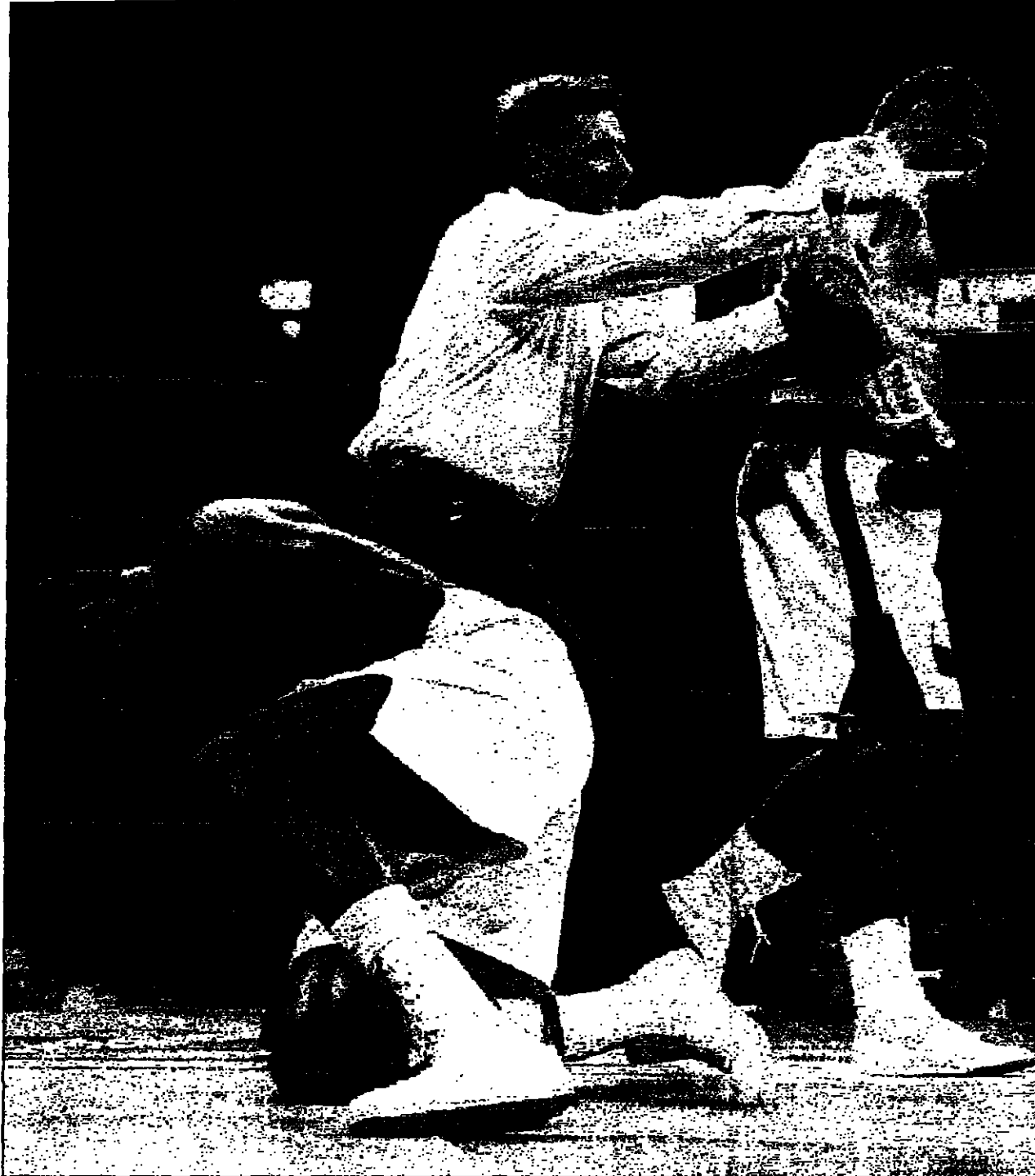
Golota, now sensing that he had Bowe on the run, began to put more punches together, but as he aimed one at the body, in order to bring Bowe's hands down, the left hook went low again. Bowe curled up in pain and Kelly took another point away from Golota and allowed Bowe time to recover. On the resumption, Golota once again started belabouring Bowe, and once again a left hand went too low. This time Kelly lost patience and waved the fight off.

The 2,000 or so Poles in the crowd of 11,252 not so much directed their anger at the referee for the disqualification as at Bowe for the way in which he choreographed his hollow victory.

"Andrew has a habit of looping his punches and Bowe kept pulling his hands down," Roger Bloodworth, one of Golota's cornermen, said. "He [Bowe] hit Andrew behind the head three or four times and was warned only once. I'm not going to argue who started it. It happened. This is a disgrace."

Emmanuel Steward, Lennox Lewis's trainer, watched the contest at his home in Detroit. "I'm not surprised Golota beat him [Bowe]," Steward said. "He has become too slow and lazy, because he has no discipline. It was strange to see a slow guy like Golota being too quick for him. He has made too much money and is not interested in fighting. If he had fought Lennox, Bowe would have been knocked out."

Bowe's weight of 252lb, which was 12lb more than when he met Evander Holyfield in November, and his lack of conditioning slowed down his reflexes and made him ponderous. Even though he is acknowledged as



Golota is ushered to a neutral corner as Bowe slumps to the canvas after receiving a low blow in the fourth round

Tyson showdown offer for Lewis

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN

LENNOX LEWIS has been given a \$20 million (£15 million) offer to challenge Mike Tyson for the World Boxing Council (WBC) heavyweight title in March in Las Vegas. The offer was made by Don King, Tyson's promoter, on Wednesday to Lewis's negotiating team, headed by Panos Eliades, the boxer's financial backer.

Eliades, who was in New York to see Riddick Bowe's bout against Andrew Golota at Madison Square Garden, denied that a deal was in the offing for a bout with Tyson, but I have it on reliable authority that King has made the offer. The package that has been offered to Lewis will

give him around \$20 million in instalments over a period of seven months.

Lewis will receive the first million dollars as soon as he agrees to the deal. Four million dollars will be paid when Tyson meets Bruce Seldon, the World Boxing Association champion, in September, and another \$4 million will be paid at the time of Tyson's bout with Evander Holyfield in November. Lewis will receive a purse of \$7 million for the bout with Tyson in March.

Lewis will also be allowed to meet Oliver McCall for the interim WBC title in September, for which he will be paid around \$4 million. The bout will be featured on the undercard of the Tyson-

Seldon bill in Las Vegas.

In return, King wants Lewis to allow Tyson to keep his WBC title, which he was contractually obliged to give up if he did not agree to defend against Lewis before anyone else.

Lewis must give his decision to King by Monday, which should be the last day of Tyson's reign. But it seems that Tyson, who values the WBC title, was not a willing party to all the politicking and has prevailed upon King to find a way of letting him keep the title by doing a deal with Lewis. If Lewis accepts the entire package, he will have to meet McCall. If he loses to McCall the rest of the deal would have to be called off. The bout with McCall is a

risky one, for the American already has a second-round win over Lewis. It is most unlikely that Lewis will be able to stop McCall, and the decision would probably have to go to the judges.

Lewis does not have to take a bout with McCall. The smart move would be to forgo the bout and the \$4 million purse that goes with it and wait to meet Tyson in March. Lewis should be satisfied with \$16 million, which is \$1 million more than the purse he was asking for in earlier negotiations to meet Tyson. If Tyson somehow did not want to fight him, Lewis would then be able to settle scores with McCall for the title which Tyson would have to vacate.

CYCLING

Leaders allow Richard to bask in the limelight

BY PETER BRYAN

FOR Pascal Richard, of Switzerland, it was a day to remember: a stage victory in the Tour de France yesterday on the 145-kilometre run into the Ardèche region from Valence to Le Puy-en-Velay in a nine-rider sprint that marked the end of a breakaway that had begun soon after the starting flag was dropped on the shortest stage of the Tour.

Richard is an all-rounder, best remembered for his victory in the world professional cyclo-cross championship in 1988. Yesterday there were none of the obstacles in his way that normally mark a cyclo-cross circuit. Even the weather was cooperative. The wind from the north was mostly on the right shoulder for the 146 starters, grateful to have left the tiring Alps behind them.

Richard earned his victory, which came after a short, sharp sprint at the end of a ride when he and his eight breakaway companions had left all the big boys of the tour wallowing in their wake.

After his victory, Richard said: "I believe the others must have felt I was a spent force and ignored me on the final kilometre run-in. But I took off and none of them was able to catch me."

His win, and the valuable minutes which he and the others had gained, came almost as a gift from the top-ten riders in an unspoken agreement to conserve their energy and take a second, but unofficial, rest day, on the understanding that no one posing a serious threat would be given any generous gesture of freedom.

Richard triumphed more than 15 minutes ahead of the main pack, but as he and the rest of the breakaway group presented no overall challenge to the likes of the Bjarne Riis, the race leader from Denmark, and his immediate rivals Evgeny Berzin, of Russia, Tony Rominger, of Switzerland,



Riis maintained his hold on leader's yellow jersey

land, and Abraham Olano, the world road champion from Spain, this was not of grave concern.

Rominger, who had injured his right knee in a crash the previous day and spent much of the night having icepacks put on the damaged limb, was one beneficiary and even Riis must have felt grateful not to have had a serious gauntlet thrown down in an attempt to relieve him of his yellow jersey.

Miguel Indurain, of Spain, so evidently suffering during the opening stages of the tour, was also happy to settle for an

TOUR DETAILS

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EQUESTRIANISM: OLYMPIC RIDER HITS RICH VEIN OF FORM

Whitaker's instant impact blocks Irish clean sweep

By Jenny MacArthur

JOHN WHITAKER, the winner of the Cock O' the North — the main showjumping event at the Great Yorkshire Show on Thursday — arrived at the Royal International Horse Show at Hickstead yesterday with the on-form Jolly Boy in time to prevent a clean sweep by the Irish in the West Sands Selsey Speed Challenge.

Conor Swail, 23, competing in his first international show outside Ireland, looked set for a fairy-tale win after holding the lead on Huntingdown for much of the competition. Only his two compatriots, Robert Splaine, on Convent Hill Diamond, and Edward Doyle, on Killoon, who finished third and fourth, came close to matching his time — until the arrival of Whitaker, the penultimate rider in the 50-strong class.

Whitaker produced an inspired round on the long-striding Belgian-bred gelding to take the lead by a convincing 2.12 seconds. "He was always the danger man,"

Swail said. The Irishman's demotion to second place was followed by a further upset when he found himself on the floor during the prize-giving ceremony after Huntingdown, a nine-year-old by Imperious, caught his mouth in the stirrup and frightened himself.

Whitaker has barely been out of the winner's enclosure since his fall from Grannusch in Sweden last week. Three days later he won the Falsterbo Grand Prix. At the Great Yorkshire he won on the opening day and again on the last. Today, on Grannusch, he will attempt a third win in the King George V Gold Cup — the centrepiece of the show — which he last won in 1990 on Milton.

The three other Olympic team riders in the class yesterday posed no threat to Whitaker. His younger brother, Michael, was introducing his young horse, Into Favour, to the imposing arena and was satisfied to complete the course with only two mistakes. Geoff Billington was unmoved by his elimination at the tenth

fence on Hit Man. "He's only just upgraded to Grade B — I was pleased he got as far as he did," Nick Skelton had no qualms about using it as a schooling round for Tinka's Boy and made no attempt to win.

Later Michel Robert, of France, gained his second win of the week on his dynamic grey stallion, Airborne Montedillo, in the West Sands Holidays International Stakes. Robert, the winner of the 1994 world championships, finished almost ten seconds ahead of the runner-up, Rob Hoekstra, of Britain, on Pebble Beach. John Whitaker, the only other Briton in the five-horse jump-off, had eight faults on Grannusch.

In the more sedate world of the working hunters the heavyweight Rocky IV, beautifully ridden by his owner, Louise Bell, from Edgehill near Banbury, won The Horse and Hound working hunter championship after a faultless display.

The majestic eight-year-old grey gelding, who is regularly used for hunting with the Warwickshire and Heythrop, was the only horse to jump a clear round. "It made up for last year," a delighted Bell said in a reference to his surprise fall in the same event 12 months ago.

There was a bomb scare at Hickstead yesterday morning when Edward Bunn, the assistant show director, found a suspicious package by the front gate while making a routine check before the arrival of the Sports Minister, Iain Sprouat. Part of the A23 was shut while army disposal experts were called in. The package turned out to be a metal box full of old brochures stolen from a tradesman.

RESULTS: West Sands Selsey Speed Challenge: 1, Jolly Boy (J Whitaker, GB) 62.55; 2, Huntingdown (C Swail, Ire) 65.05; 3, Convent Hill Diamond (R Splaine, Ire) 65.53. West Sands Holidays International Stakes: 1, Airborne Montedillo (M Robert, Fr) 0 in 48.24; 2, Pebble Beach (R Hoekstra, GB) 0 in 58.10; 3, VHS Hunter (S Hammer, Nor) 0 in 50.58. Equestrian Innovations National Winter Young Riders Championships: 1, Cowboy Midge Deep Head (L Whelan, D) 0 in 41.58; 2, Grey Sky (C Rosewell, D) 0 in 43.00; 3, Mistic (R Davenport, D) 0 in 47.88.



John Whitaker and Jolly Boy on their way to an impressive victory in the West Sands Selsey Speed Challenge

Ford inflicts fresh blow on Bridgend

STEVE FORD, the heaviest man in Welsh rugby union, has left Bridgend to join Heineken League first division rivals Llanelli. The 21-year-old lock, who weighs more than 20 stones, toured Australia with Wales this summer and was seen by Stradey Park officials as the most suitable replacement for Phil Davies, Llanelli's former captain.

Derek King, the Bridgend chairman, said: "I am very disappointed with Steve's decision. He came to us from Aberavon as a relative unknown and ended up going on the Wales tour. I'm certain he could have continued to make the same progress by staying with us." It is the second blow Bridgend have suffered in a fortnight, following the departure of Robert Howley to Cardiff.

Lawler has title in sight

CANOEING: Ivan Lawler, the world champion, and Steven Harris will be among the line-up of top British canoeists competing in the National marathon championship at the Thameside Promenade in Reading this weekend.

They will be battling for the national title and selection for the world championship in Sweden next month. It will be Lawler's final appearance in this country before he leaves for the Olympics in Atlanta, where he'll compete in the 500 and the 1,000 metres singles events.

Students pass test

RUGBY UNION: South Africa, the hosts for the Student Rugby World Cup, qualified for the semi-final against Scotland with a 30-25 win over Wales in Pretoria yesterday. Wales fought back bravely after trailing 20-8 at half-time.

South Africa's tries came from their flankers, Francois Malherbe and Peet Arnold, and Donovan van Wyk, the centre, and Ricardo Laubscher, the wing. Wales's tries were scored by Richard James and Duncan Hughes, the centres, Darren Morris and Chris Anthony, a flanker.

Perec attempts double

ATHLETICS: Marie-Jose Perec, the French Olympic champion, is to try to match Michael Johnson by attempting a 200 metres-400 metres double in Atlanta. The French sports newspaper *L'Equipe* said Perec, who won the 400m gold medal in Barcelona four years ago and the world title over the same distance last year, had changed her mind after maintaining that she would not enter the shorter distance.

Siddall in both finals

TENNIS: Shiri-Ann Siddall, the No 1 seed, has reached both finals in the LTA women's event in Felixstowe, to be played today. Siddall, 22, from Dorset, who beat Lorna Woodroffe, of Surrey, 6-3, 6-4 in the semi-final, meets Anita Kurimsay, from Hungary, in the singles and, with Lucie Ahl, of Devon, takes on Katia Roubanova, of Berkshire, and Surina de Beer, from South Africa, in the doubles.

WEEKEND FIXTURES

Today

CRICKET

Benson and Hedges Cup

Final

11.0, 50 overs

LORD'S: Lancashire v

Northamptonshire

THIRD WOMEN'S TEST MATCH (second

day of four): Guildford: England v New

Zealand

RUGBY LEAGUE

Stones Super League

Paris Saint-Germain v

London Broncos (5.0)

OTHER SPORT

BOWLS: Scottish Masters (at Aberdeen)

BOXING: British light-welterweight cham-

pionship: Paul Ryan v Andy Halligan (York

Hall, Bethnal Green)

EQUESTRIANISM: Royal International

Horse Show (at Hickstead)

GOLF: Scottish Open (at Carnoustie)

MOTOR SPORT: Formula Three Cham-

pionship, Auto Trader/RAC Touring Car

Championship (at Silverstone)

SPEEDWAY: Premier League: Bradford v

Swindon (7.30); Coventry v Long Eaton

(7.30); Eastbourne v Wolverhampton (7.30);

Speedway Star Cup: Second round,

second leg: Cradley Heath and Stoke (4.30)

v Belle Vue (5.30) (at Stoke, 7.30)

SWIMMING: ASA national championships

(Leeds)

TENNIS: LTA challenge tournament

(Bristol)

Tomorrow

CRICKET

AXA Equity & Law League

2.0, 40 overs

DERBY: Derbyshire v Durham

CHELSEA: Essex v Glamorgan

MORETON-IN-MARSH: Gloucester-

shire v Kent

SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v

The Oval: Surrey v Worcestershire

1.0, 40 overs

LEICESTER: Leicestershire v Middlesex

Tues matches

10.45, 50 overs

SHENLEY PARK MCC v Pakistanis

SWANSEA: Wales v South Africa A

MINOR COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP (first

day of two): South Park: Bedfordshire v

Norfolk, Bowdon: Cheshire v Berkshire,

Tues: Cornwall v Dorset, Brockschampton:

Havantshire v Wiltshire

THIRD WOMEN'S TEST MATCH (third day

of four): Guildford: England v New Zealand

RUGBY LEAGUE

Stones Super League

Ocham Bears v Castleford Tigers (3.0)

Sheffield Eagles v Leeds

(at Bramall Lane, 5.30)

St Helens v Halifax Blue Sox (6.0)

Worthington v Warrington (3.0)

First division

Dewsbury v Rochdale (3.30)

Featherstone v Whitehaven (3.30)

Huddersfield Giants v

Bellerby Bulldogs (6.30)

Salford Reds v Wakefield (3.0)

Widnes v Hull (3.0)

Second division

Bramley v Carlisle (5.0)

Doncaster Dragons v South Wales (3.0)

Hull KR v Chorley Magpies (6.30)

Prescot Panthers v

Leigh Centurions (3.0)

OTHER SPORT

BOWLS: Scottish Masters (at Aberdeen)

EQUESTRIANISM: Royal International

Horse Show (at Hickstead)

GOLF: Open championship final

qualifying

MOTOR SPORT: British Grand Prix,

Formula Three championship and Auto

Trader/RAC Touring Car Championship (at

Silverstone)

SPEEDWAY: Premier League: Swindon v

Bradford (6.0); Scottish Monarchs v

Cradley Heath and Stoke (6.30); Con-

venture League: Eastbourne v Avon

Essex (11.0); Midland v Ryde (11.0)

(3.30)

SWIMMING: ASA national championships

(Leeds)

TENNIS: LTA challenge tournament

(Bristol)

THE TIMES

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FOR AN
MP'S FAMILY?

CHANGING TIMES

CRICKET: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RELY ON PEERLESS FAST BOWLER AND VETERAN OFF SPINNER IN BENSON AND HEDGES CUP FINAL

Lancashire must withstand final fling by Ambrose

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

THE sentimental will gather behind Northamptonshire in the Benson and Hedges Cup final today, for this is a club that has won less than it ought, fielding two men who will probably not be seen on such a stage again. Pragmatists, however, will favour Lancashire, whose players scarcely remember what it is to lose in this competition.

It is the classic final, pitting the biggest of county clubs against one of the smallest, and if Lancashire's might, in terms of members and financial resources, is not quite reflected in their recent achievements, they have become much the most formidable force in this early-season event.

The final today will be their fifth in the 1990s. In the 25-year history of the competition, only Kent have played or won more games than Lancashire, yet they last won the cup in 1978. Lancashire's recent record is unparalleled and they come into the final unbeaten in their past 15 Benson and Hedges Cup matches.

Set against them is a team that spent the majority of last season contemplating two trophies and the closing days mourning their loss. Warwickshire overhauled them in the championship and then beat them in the final of the NatWest Trophy, but at the heart of their side today will be two men, Curtly Ambrose and John Emburey, who had no part in these frustrations.

Ambrose was on duty with West Indies last summer and his overseas position was admirably filled by Anil Kumble. Pushing 33, with an awful lot of bowling miles covered and a query over his enthusiasm, it was mildly surprising that Ambrose was recalled by Northamptonshire this year, yet his contribution has been exemplary.

"It is not only that he has bowled well," Steve Coverdale, the county's chief executive, explained. "He has wanted to be involved in

everything — fielding in the slip cordon and generally encouraging everyone. He stopped a game today and went to walk from first slip and pass on a bit of advice to one of our young bowlers."

Not the surly Ambrose of old, then, and all who witnessed his animated celebration of the cathartic semi-final win over Warwickshire will be aware how much it means to him to be playing one more time before a full house at Lord's. There is a chance, though, that it will not be Ambrose's farewell to the big time of county cricket. After protracted talks with both players, Northamptonshire believe Kumble requires a rest



Emburey: bowling out

from cricket next summer and are preparing an offer to keep Ambrose at the club.

This wonderful West Indian bowler will command respect and admiration today, and there will be great anticipation of his duel with Michael Atherton. The England captain ruefully acknowledges that it is his duty to see off Ambrose at the start of the Lancashire innings while his club captain, Mike Watkinson, launches into his pitch-hitting role against the other bowlers. This will be a critical phase of the game.

The affection of the crowd, however, will largely be reserved for Emburey, 11 years the senior of Ambrose and

now ready to terminate his playing career as the most consistent off-spin bowler in England, if not the world. Emburey will stand down from the Northamptonshire side, to whom his primary duty is as coach, after the game today and there could be no more appropriate way to finish than on the ground that was his home for 23 years.

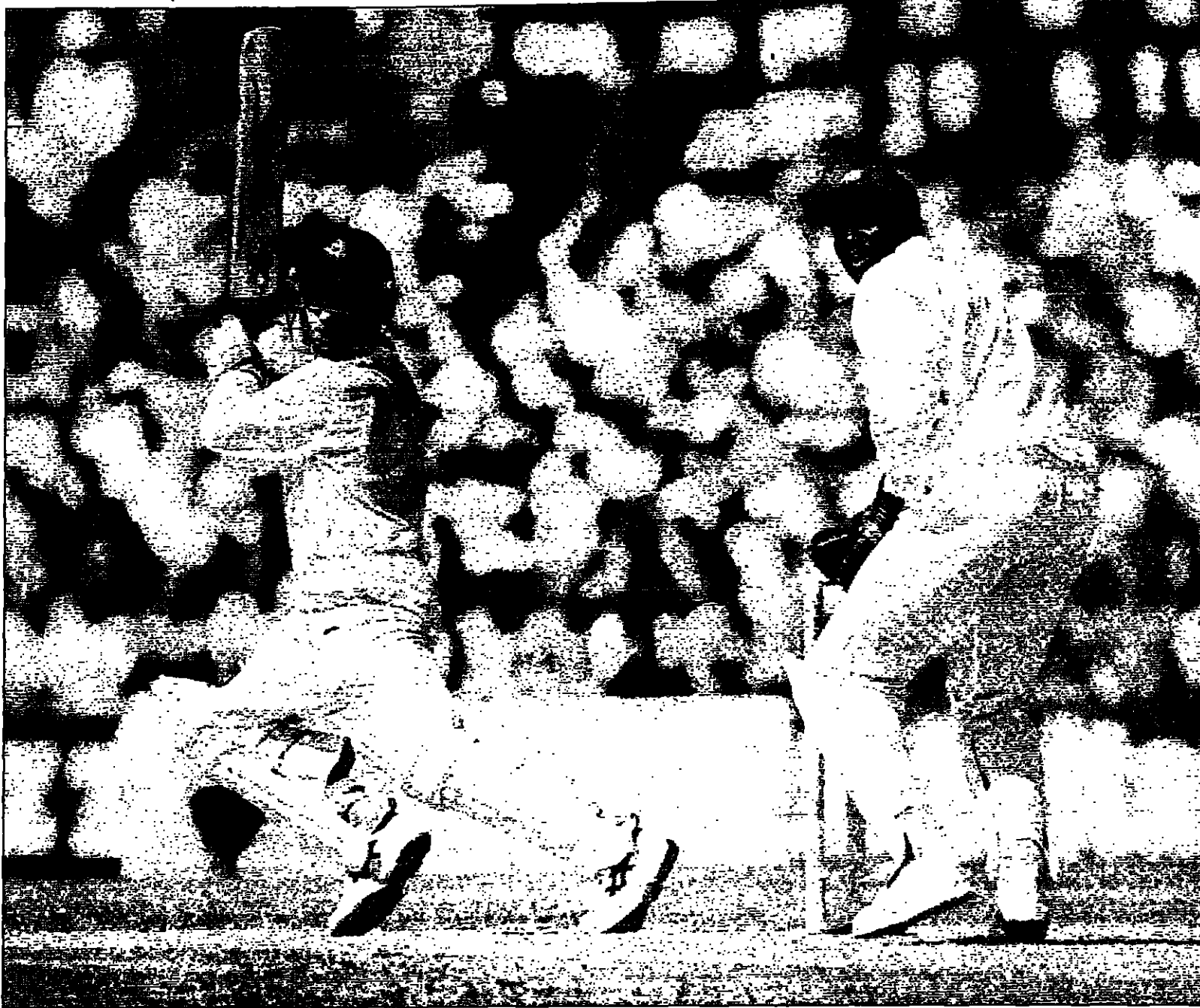
Emburey can be pardoned if there is a flicker of something other than nostalgia when he walks past the Middlesex offices at the rear of the pavilion. Few players have represented that club for so long or so successfully and there was a measure of spirit about their insistence that he could move to Northampton only as a contested, list one registration.

John has been consistent all along in his attitude to playing for us," Coverdale said. "He will phase himself out now but the situation can alter depending on the performance of whoever takes his place." For Emburey, however, this is the place to close the chapter.

Northamptonshire are far from being a two-man team. They will select from a party of 14, but the likelihood is that Tim Walton, who made an influential and impressive 70 not out in the semi-final, yet was omitted from their NatWest Trophy side on Wednesday, will return at the expense of Alan Fordham. David Capel will open the innings, the calculated aggressor in what is the first domestic final to be played with the 15-over field restrictions.

Northamptonshire have an enviable wealth of young batsmen and neither David Sales nor David Roberts, two of the brightest teenage talents in the country, will be considered today. Their depth may soon sustain another bid for the championship title they have never won, a mystery almost as deep as Lancashire's failure to win it outright since 1934.

The advent of one-day cricket brought a new, lively audience to Old Trafford and, though some might argue the point, revised perspectives and priorities at the club. Lancashire have won 11 limited-overs trophies now, yet finished in the top three of the championship only once since 1971. If they win today, as the bookmakers believe they will, it may assuage any malcontents once more, but it really is about time Lancashire mounted a proper challenge for the most significant trophy of the season.



Fairbrother has made his mark in one-day cricket at the highest level. Northamptonshire must stem the flow of runs at Lord's today

Little man writ large on the Lord's stage

Michael Henderson talks to Neil Fairbrother, the one-day master whose wicket will be among the most prized today

Bowlers everywhere will tell you: so long as Neil Fairbrother is in, Lancashire always have a chance of winning a one-day match. If there is a wicket Northamptonshire prize above others today it is the little chap who bats at No 4. He may not be as lithe as he was in his youth but he drives opponents mad with his ability to steal runs where none seem to exist.

How many limited-overs matches has Fairbrother won with his batting? Too many to contemplate, and certainly more than any other English batsman. His fielding used to win matches, too, until his hamstring muscles started playing up. It is funny to think he is now the senior pro in the Lancashire dressing-room, 12 years older than the "Little Ted" who first played at Lord's.

This is his sixth Benson and Hedges Cup final, a record he sets today with Mike Watkinson, who succeeded him as captain, and who held up the trophy last year. That was more than Fairbrother could do. Appointed leader on

the morning of the 1991 final, after a dressing-room coup had unseated David Hughes, he ran himself out and Lancashire lost to Worcestershire in a match carried over into Sunday. Two years later his unbeaten 87 failed by six runs to beat Derbyshire as he ran out of partners in the gloaming.

That defeat was the darkest day of a period of captaincy that began amid bright hopes and instead brought bitterness. He spent much of his two seasons as leader struggling to stay fit and when he stood down at the end of the 1993 season it was an unhappy man who returned to the ranks. He was not helped by the absurd sideshow that preceded his appointment, and by Hughes's immediate promotion to an ill-defined managerial role, but the truth is probably that he never really got the measure of the job. Those were bad days, but

they are outnumbered by the happy ones. In that first final, against Warwickshire, Fairbrother smashed the winning runs with the delight of the colt he was. "David Hughes, who had played in a few finals, was batting with me towards the end and told me to savour the moment," he recalled, "but all I could think about was knocking off the runs."

Then, in 1990, came the first of two successive finals against Worcestershire, who were mightier than they are today. That was Phil Neale's team of Botham, Dilley and a young, carefree Hick. Fairbrother failed with the bat but contributed in the field to one of the outstanding one-day performances, adorned by an incomparable burst of fast bowling by Wasim Akram that scared poor Hick out of his wits.

There have been other glorious moments, for England. A

match-winning century against West Indies at Lord's in 1991 offered partial compensation for a Test career that never got started. When he left the field that day he brandished his bat to all parts of the ground, for he has always been a popular cricketer. At the 1992 World Cup he got England to the final and, once there, did his best to win it. Pakistan, and Wasim, were just too good on that occasion. He should never have returned for the World Cup earlier this year and when he returned home early with a pulled hamstring, it just about put the tin lid on England's lamentable preparation.

Northamptonshire have cause to remember the left-hander well. The last time they met Lancashire at Lord's, in the 1990 NatWest Trophy, Ambrose pardoned him on six and Fairbrother went on to make 81 from 68 balls, winning a one-sided final. The

teams are more fairly matched today and Lancashire, who beat their opponents at Old Trafford on Wednesday by one wicket, know only their best will do. "At the moment," Fairbrother said, "we are playing very ordinary cricket."

Lancashire scraped through a titanic semi-final against Yorkshire, off the last ball with their last pair together, when Peter Martin thick-edged a drive for two. However moderately the team is playing, Fairbrother feels in excellent shape. "I've scored one or two runs this season. The captaincy has gone, my benefit is out of the way, and it is time to repay people." After the gilded spring of his career, and the troublesome summer, there may be a sun-kissed autumn.

"I do not have any specific targets. I would like to play in a championship team but that has not happened, although you never know. I'm 32 and if anybody had offered me what I have had from the game at the start of my career I would be more than grateful."

LORD'S STATISTICS

LANCASHIRE (from M. Watkinson (captain), M. A. Atherton, J. E. R. Gallen, J. P. Crawley, N. H. Fairbrother, N. J. Speak, G. D. Lloyd, W. K. Hogg, I. D. Austin, S. Eborah, G. Vales, P. J. Martin, G. Chapple, S. P. Richard).

ROUTE TO FINAL: Group matches: best Minor Counties by 25 runs; best Durham by seven wickets; best Derbyshire on higher run rate; best Lancashire by eight wickets; best Warwickshire by one wicket. Quarter-final: best Gloucestershire by five wickets. Semi-final: best Yorkshire by one wicket.

TELEVISION: Sky Sports 2, 10.30am-7.30pm. BBC2, 8.00pm (nighttime).

WEATHER: Dry with sunny intervals, rain spreading from north in evening.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (from R. J. Bailey (captain), D. J. Capel, R. R. Worrell, M. B. Lloy, R. J. Warren, K. M. Curran, T. C. Walton, A. L. Pennington, J. E. Emburey, C. E. L. Ambrose, J. P. Taylor, A. Fordham, J. N. Smees, N. A. Walder).

ROUTE TO FINAL: Group matches: best Worcestershire by four wickets; best Scotland by five wickets; best Nottinghamshire by six wickets; best Yorkshire by seven wickets. Quarter-final: best Kent by 23 runs. Semi-final: best Warwickshire by 27 runs.

UNOFFICIAL: M. J. Kitchen and G. Sharp, TV replay umpires; R. Julian.

South Africa bat their way to draw

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

SHENLEY (final day of three): MCC drew with South Africa A

THE three-day match between MCC and South Africa A at Shenley petered out into a draw yesterday with the touring team never quite far enough ahead for a challenging declaration.

Compensation for them came in three excellent innings: a career-best 183 from Herschelle Gibbs, an unbeaten 114 by the captain, John Cornery, and a useful 73 from Gernny Liebenberg.

The day started with the South Africans 133 for one, needing 54 to avoid an innings defeat after following on. This target was reached quickly and, by lunch, the score had moved on to 205 for two.

The only further wickets to fall were those of Liebenberg and, after a fourth-wicket stand worth 239 in 49 overs, of Gibbs, who struck 25 fours and five sixes in beating his previous mark of 152 not out. Meanwhile, Cornery had 17 fours in his century. Although the South Africans will be pleased with their batting form, in the latter part of the day the bowling was less than demanding.

MCC were without Robert

Croft, who had a back strain, but he hopes to be fit to play for Glamorgan in their Sunday league match against Essex at Chelmsford.

The inaugural Super Eight, launched by the Australian Cricket Board with the aim of spreading the game's popularity in Asia, attracted a royal opening by the King of Malaysia and a feast of runs on the opening day in Kuala Lumpur.

Matthew Hayden set the tone with an unbeaten 66 as Australia A cracked 205 for seven from their 14 overs against India, who managed 172 for six in reply.

New Zealand defeated Australia by six wickets with 15 balls to spare, Nathan Astle giving them a victory platform with 53 off 18 balls after Australia made 160 for seven.

South Africa beat an Asian Invitation XI, led by the former Australia captain, Allan Border, by seven wickets. Pat Symcox inspired the South African success with an unbeaten 43 and three wickets for four runs.

Toby Peirce, 22, a batsman who left Sussex last summer to take up a job in the City, is having trials with Middlesex. Toby Radford, who was released by Middlesex last year, has moved in the opposite direction and been awarded a contract by Sussex.

Nazar carried his bat in the match against India at Lucknow during the 1952-53 series. The feat was repeated by his son, Mudassar Nazar, also against India, at Lahore in 1982-83.

England made to toil by New Zealand's top order

By IVO TENNANT

GUILDFORD (first day of four): New Zealand won; New Zealand have scored 362 for five wickets against England

DEAD pitches, drab weather and dull draws. That, apart from some powerful batting, has been the story of England's women's summer. On the first day of the third and final Test, in conditions which again were not conducive to gaining a positive result, batsmen were again to the fore. Two national records were broken by New Zealand, whose upper order struck the ball hard and well.

This is the 100th women's Test match worldwide since 1934, when England first played Australia. Considering how much cricket is undertaken by their male counterparts, it rarely is so great a number. One of the reasons for this was all too evident yesterday: on a cramped ground which Surrey will reckon to fill for their festival next week, there were only around 400 spectators present.

Among these were the parents of Charlotte Edwards, who at the age of 16 is the youngest player England have ever fielded. Although seven bowlers were used on an extremely flat pitch, her leg

spin, alas, was not required. She spent much of the day retrieving the ball from the outfield and graciously accepting many compliments. "Her friends are too young to afford flowers," joked Shirley Taylor, the England manager.

Contrast such precociousness with the considerable experience of the New Zealanders. Led by Ian Illingworth, who was born in the north of England — and who has some of the cussedness that comes with the name — they have in their party eight of the side beaten by England in the 1993 World Cup final.

"You could say we have some unfinished business,"

Sarah Illingworth, the New Zealand captain, said. Next year, when the World Cup is to be held in India, New Zealand are again expected to be one of the strongest sides in the competition.

All of their upper order (they do not, thankfully, call themselves batspersons) made runs yesterday. Debbie Hockley, who also played for her country at the age of 16, came into bat in a helmet, which was quite unnecessary and worked the ball around the wicket in making 65 in that thorough way which has taken her average for New Zealand above fifty, the benchmark of the top-class player. Her partnership of 150 for the first wicket with Shelley Fruin was one record.

The other was the stand of 106 between Kirsty Flavel and Emily Drumm for the third wicket. Nobody hit the ball harder than Drumm, whose 62 included ten fours. Flavel, who on her debut, against India last year scored 94, and who made 204 in the second Test at Scarborough, was out for 97 in the penultimate over of the day when Clare Taylor held a sharp catch at mid-wicket. By then, Flavel, a primary school teacher, was placing the ball exactly where she pleased.

England's catching was the most impressive aspect of their cricket yesterday. Smit stooped low at the wicket when Hockley made to cut a wide one from Taylor, who then held a second fine catch at mid-off to account for Drumm. They will have to bat as competently today as they did at Scarborough but on this pitch that should not be beyond their compass.



Hockley: record stand

GUILDFORD SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings	
S Fruin run out	80
J Hockley c Smit b Taylor	65
K Russell c Taylor b Smith	97
E Drumm c Taylor b Redfern	62
M Lewis b Davidson	36
S Illingworth not out	0
K Brown not out	2
Extras	20
Total (8 wickets)	362
ENGLAND: First Innings	
J Britton, S Mercelle, C Edwards, J Smit, K Leng, C Taylor, L Pearson, D Stock, S Redfern	362
Umpires: K Taylor and V Williams	

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27/11/2015

GOLF: SCOT ADOPTS BROOMHANDLE PUTTER TO KEEP WOOSNAM IN SIGHT AT CARNOUSTIE

Lyle's mastery of greens brings immediate result

A LITTLE justice was done at Carnoustie yesterday. After the rain and drabness of the first day and the brittle sunshine and firm wind of the second, a tranquillity descended on this part of Angus. At last competitors in the Scottish Open were able to do battle with the considerable challenges of this magnificent par-72 course without the added danger of being drenched or blown off their feet.

The justice was provided by the fact that the man who announced himself again on this day was none other than Scotland's most-loved golfer.

Alexander Walter Barry Lyle, though born in Shrewsbury and raised as a Shropshire lad, swore allegiance to the land of the saltire through thick and thin. Lately it has been nothing but thin. Legion are the stories of Lyle's woes and almost as legion are the stories of the first faltering steps of recovery. At last the steps are not so faltering, now that Lyle is accompanied by a putter that comes up to his shoulder and with which he took up during the Irish Open less than one week ago.

It takes an eternity to learn how to use these putters, which have become so modish. The first task is to overcome a feeling of looking stupid when holding an item that does not resemble a golf club. The second is to gauge the balance and timing necessary to hit the ball. The third is to use it accurately. Lyle has been practising with this formidable-looking implement for 15 minutes each day and has not three-putted since he started using it. Since putting was one of his weaknesses, this is progress indeed.

His 68 was something to get excited about because it demonstrated that the former Open and Masters champion is regaining an appetite for the game. Lyle had concluded his dinner on Thursday evening before he rang to find out whether his nine-over-par

JOHN HOPKINS



Golf Correspondent

total was good enough for him to be required for the third and fourth rounds. When it was the highest cut on the PGA European Tour this year he was pleased.

"Things had gone quite well," Lyle explained. "My timing on the range had been quite good. I was anxious to play." These are not words one

Results 51

is accustomed to hearing from Lyle, who was recently said to be so depressed with his golf that he was on the point of quitting. It is clear that things are, indeed, beginning to look up for Lyle, even though his 54-hole total of 221 was five over par and seven strokes behind Ian Woosnam, the leader and the only man under par.

This week Carnoustie has certainly identified the men who can play golf. When men such as Lyle, Woosnam and Montgomerie are making the running it is clear that the event is not being staged on a titchy course that covers beneath the powerful play of the modern professional.

"This is a course that does not depend on a lot of putting,"

Woosnam said. "Anything can happen on this course."

It certainly did. Woosnam driving much better than before and putting well. He had a purple patch when he picked up four strokes in as many holes from the turn. That the course was at its most benign is obvious from the clubs Woosnam used — a five-iron to 25 feet on the 10th, a one-iron, that travelled nearly 250 yards, to six feet on the 12th and a five-iron again on the short 13th.

There is a look in his eye and something about the set of his jaw that suggests that he will not easily be prevented from once again claiming a title he has won twice already. The man who must stand a chance of stopping him if anyone can is Montgomerie. Woosnam has already begun the psychological warfare with his Ryder Cup colleague by suggesting that Montgomerie is favourite to win the money-list again as he has these past three years. Tackled on this, Woosnam grinned and admitted that he did not believe it.

In Montgomerie's favour is the fact that he got a bad round containing a lot of bad shots out of his system without taking more than 71. It is some player who can play as poorly as Montgomerie did and still return an under-par score. "That was a miserable performance," Montgomerie said. "I cannot be as fortunate again."

But these are funny times for the Scot, a time when life's certainties do not seem so certain. His driving and iron play, for so long so secure, looked frail while the departments that he has most complained about, his putting and, to a lesser degree, his chipping, again and again came to his rescue. It is significant that after this round he walked briskly to the practice ground for a rendezvous with Bill Ferguson, his faithful teacher. He does not do that very often.



Woosnam displays the style on the 10th tee that left him as the only man under par

RUGBY LEAGUE

Bell must find rapid solution to Leeds' woes

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

LEEDS ended an initially dreadful start to their Super League campaign at the expense of Sheffield Eagles in April and must perform the same feat in the return fixture at Bramall Lane tomorrow to prevent a relegation worry becoming a full-blown crisis.

Sheffield are badly hit by injuries and their recent record is as poor as that of Leeds, but the visitors certainly cannot take anything for granted after last week's defeat by Oldham Bears.

Leeds are far from the force they were and expectations are much lower than they were just a few months ago, but few people can be reveling in the mess that one of the game's biggest clubs find themselves in after only four wins in 15 Super League games.

If Paris Saint-Germain and Workington both win this weekend and Leeds lose, the prospect of first division rugby at Headingley next season will loom large. Dean Bell's comment yesterday that "we've not been playing smart" is one of many hard truths, for which the Leeds coach shares some responsibility.

To arrive at Headingley at the same time as the money dried up was unfortunate for Bell. However, he is in the same position that most coaches in England are in.

Although Bell can see where things are going wrong on the pitch, he has so far been unable to put it right. "Our defence is very soft, particularly round the ruck area and that's something we've been working on," he said. "The players have got to be responsible for their tackling. You can work out techniques but at the end of the day, the players have to put their bodies on the line."

It is at half back that Leeds have been at their weakest, hence Bell's delight at having Tony Kemp available again after a neck injury. Kevin Iro and Francis Cummins are less certain to be fit, but Bell's injury problems pale by comparison with those of Gary

Hetherington, the Sheffield coach, who is missing two-thirds of his regular side.

St Helens require Wigan to slip up once and then win their remaining seven games, starting at home to Halifax Blue Sox tomorrow, in order to take the lead back from their rivals and win the inaugural Super League title.

Halifax, fully recovered from their dismal start, are unbeaten in their last five away matches. If St Helens defend as weakly as they did in losing heavily at Bradford Bulls a week ago, then Halifax could end a 35-year wait to win a league match at Knowsley Road.

Shaun McRae, the St Helens coach, said: "I still believe we can take the title. Wigan and ourselves have still to travel to London Broncos. They are key games. After Halifax we've a month without a home game. If we can return in mid-August without losing, we'll be in a very strong position."

Bobbie Goulding, the St Helens' scrum half, and the forwards, Chris Joynt and Vila Matautia, are all rated as "50-50" to play. Halifax hope to have Karl Harrison restored to the front row and Mike Umaga at full back after injury.

Yesterday, Scott Gibbs, the St Helens centre, failed in an appeal against a two-match ban by the RFL disciplinary committee for illegal use of the elbow in the Bradford match. In another case, Ian Russell, Paris's Australian loose forward, had a two-match suspension reduced to one.

Oldham's win at Leeds was their fourth in five outings and, at home tomorrow, they will be seeking their first league double over Castleford Tigers since the 1973-74 season. The only problem is a sickness bug affecting all but four of the first team squad.

Simon Middleton replaces Dixon Edwards, who broke his leg in the defeat at Wigan last week, on Castleford's left wing.

FOOTBALL

Interest rates rise in Premiership

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ENGLAND'S smooth organisation of Euro 96, the team's success in reaching the semi-finals and the continuing arrival of many of Europe's leading players have led to an upsurge in pre-season ticket sales for the 1996-97 FA Cup Premiership campaign. Middlesbrough, who bought Fabrizio Ravanelli from Juventus for £7 million, have already sold 99 per cent of their season tickets — about 26,500 seats.

Chelsea and West Ham United, who have also invested substantially in the continental market during the summer, report increased demand at the box office, as do Everton, Arsenal, Tottenham Hotspur and newly-promoted Sunderland. Even Wimbledon, one of the worst supported clubs in the Premiership, have seen renewed interest. "We've had a lot of new buyers," a club spokesman said yesterday.

Aston Villa yesterday confirmed the Premiership's obsession with foreign imports when they bought Fernando Nelson, 26, a full back, from Sporting Lisbon for £1.75 mil-

lion. Initially, he will cover for Gary Charles, who broke an ankle last season and is sidelined until the new year.

"We are adding a top-quality player to our squad," Brian Little, the Villa manager, said. "Everything has gone through. He's had a medical, met the players, speaks good English and is very excited about joining us."

Graeme Souness, the new Southampton manager, has persuaded Terry Cooper, the former Bristol City and Exeter City manager, to return to football as part of his coaching team at The Dell.

Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds United manager, is threatening to withhold the wages of Tomas Brodin, who failed to return to the club for pre-season training this week. Brodin is believed to be sorting out a move to an Italian club.

Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle United manager, is to seek assurances from David Ginola, his French striker, that he still wants to play for the club. Ginola has been linked with a £4 million switch to Barcelona.

TENNIS: YOUNGSTERS MAKE WINNING START TO TESTING DAVIS CUP TIE

Henman leads the way for Britain

By ALIX RAMSAY

AFTER all the dramas, all the worrying and all the premonitions of doom, Great Britain's step in to the unknown proved relatively painless yesterday. Playing the opening singles matches of their Davis Cup tie against Ghana, Tim Henman and Luke Milligan gave Britain a comfortable 2-0 lead, beating Isaac Donkor and Frank Ofori, respectively.

The conditions were not exactly what English tennis followers have come to expect from watching Wimbledon, but Henman and Milligan managed to rise to the occasion. The 1,000-seater stadium was heaving with a loud and raucous crowd, although there were a few British supporters determined to make their presence felt. The normal niceties of tennis seemed to be lost on some of the spectators. A small fight broke out in the middle of Milligan's match and Henman's victory came amid an atmosphere of ill-feeling stemming from the opening ceremony on the previous day.

David Lloyd, the Great Britain team captain, had accused Ghana of unprofessionalism and inhospitality after a string of patriotic speeches. The Ghana Tennis Association

chairman, Stanley Owusu, had referred to the tie as "D-Day" and added: "This is my baby and all I want is victory."

Lloyd said: "It wasn't a question of, 'may the best man win and have a good match.' It was more, 'we are going to stuff you come what may.' I thought they would be more professional than that."

But once all the problems off the court had been resolved, the British players were most certainly in charge on it. The officials seemed to be in charge, too. There were a few overruled calls but the umpires' decisions were awarded equally between the teams.

Henman wasted little time and less energy in the hot and humid conditions in disposing of Donkor. The Ghanaian No 2 decided the only way to beat a Wimbledon quarter-finalist was to come racing into the net at every opportunity. Unfortunately for Donkor,

DETAILS

Great Britain 2 Ghana 0

Great Britain names first T Henman bt I Donkor 6-2, 6-0, 6-2. L Milligan bt F Ofori 6-1, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2. TODAY: N Broad and M Petchey v D Ombaoe and I Quayle (2.0). TOMORROW: Henman v Ofori; Milligan v Donkor (11.0).



Henman: straight-sets win

when he got there he was unsure of what to do next and only succeeded in setting himself up as a target for Henman to pass. After 90 minutes, Henman had won 6-2, 6-0, 6-2.

Milligan faced a sterner test in his Davis Cup debut. Playing Ofori, the only Ghanaian in the team with a world ranking, he had to battle to win 6-1, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2. Ofori got off to a slow start, losing the first three games, but settled into his rhythm at the start of the second set and began to fight back. But with Ofori serving at 5-5 in the third set,

Milligan made his move and broke the Ghanaian No 1, converting the second of his set points.

That seemed to take the wind out of Ofori's sails and from then on he appeared to be in trouble. He fell a couple of times and began to suffer from cramp. Trying to slow down the play as much as possible, he took his time between points and stretched the change-over periods to the limit. He was warned for slow play in the second game of the fourth set and when that did not hurry things along, he was docked a penalty point for the same offence.

Despite the delaying tactics and the obvious support of the crowd for Ofori, Milligan held his nerve and capitalised on Ofori's lack of fitness and experience. He broke Ofori's serve again to lead 4-2 and broke him again to close out the match.

Today Mark Petchey and Neil Broad face Daniel Ombaoe and Tetteh Quayle in the doubles, played during the midday heat, and a victory would put the tie beyond Ghana's reach. That would ensure a home tie for Britain against either Egypt or the Ivory Coast to earn promotion from Euro-Africa zone group two.

Paris aim to light blue touch-paper

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

ON THE eve of Bastille Day, one or two fireworks might go off early in the capital confrontation tonight between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and the invading London Broncos, who were 38-22 winners in their first Super League meeting.

Provided the follow-up is as full-blooded, the holiday crowd at the Charley Stadium will feel they are getting their free tickets' worth, particularly if PSG end their 11-match losing streak.

The Paris branch of the European Super League is a strange set-up altogether. It has no front office; no obvious income; no firm commercial or marketing strategy. French players who commute from the south: Australians who arrive with every in-bound flight from Sydney; and two Englishmen doing most of the coaching.

By the latest count, Paris had reached 48 in the League's shambolic squad numbering system, as good a sign as any that all is not as it should be. Yet there are no replica shirts for sale anywhere, as if the club is not felt worthy of recognition. The PSG "omni-sports" organisation has made rugby league about as welcome as a French chef would

boiled beef and carrots on his menu.

Paris, then, lean heavily on the Rugby Football League (RFL) in England for money and ideas. Dave Ellis, an English coach in France, and John Kear, on secondment as RFL coaching executive, have plastered over some of the cracks but they now desperately need a win after losing 14-10 to fellow strugglers Workington last Sunday.

Paris, however, are unlikely to be relegated even if they finish bottom: the "European" tag to the Super League hangs by their French thread. Workington's survival instincts prevailed against Paris six days ago, which was a disappointment for Kear. "We are defending better and perhaps we compromised on attack to get this right, but as the newcomers from Australia settle in and a pattern develops, we are capable of winning again," he said.

London's lack of consistency has been their bugbear this season, but Paris should present few terrors in their push for a top-four place. The Broncos will have the support of Leeds, who must overcome Sheffield Eagles at Bramall Lane tomorrow to calm their own fears about relegation.



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MOTOR RACING: HAPPY-GO-LUCKY BRITISH DRIVER SHOWS HIS SERIOUS SIDE AND HOPES TO PASS SCREEN TEST BACK IN THE PITS

Herbert ready for lead role

OLIVER HOLT



At the British Grand Prix

JOHNNY HERBERT arrived at Silverstone early yesterday. He walked through the paddock, trading light-hearted insults with everyone he met, chatted conspiratorially with his former team-mate, Pedro Lamy, and fretted briefly about a ticket he needed to procure. Then he wandered into the Ford motor home, sat on a sofa and contemplated life back at square one.

He was surprised, he said, about how much traffic was coming into the circuit. It was the worst he had seen since 1992, when England was in the grip of Mansell-mania. He knew, though, it was Damon Hill they were pouring into the Northamptonshire countryside to support. The acclaim Herbert bathed in when he won the British Grand Prix here last year disappeared long ago.

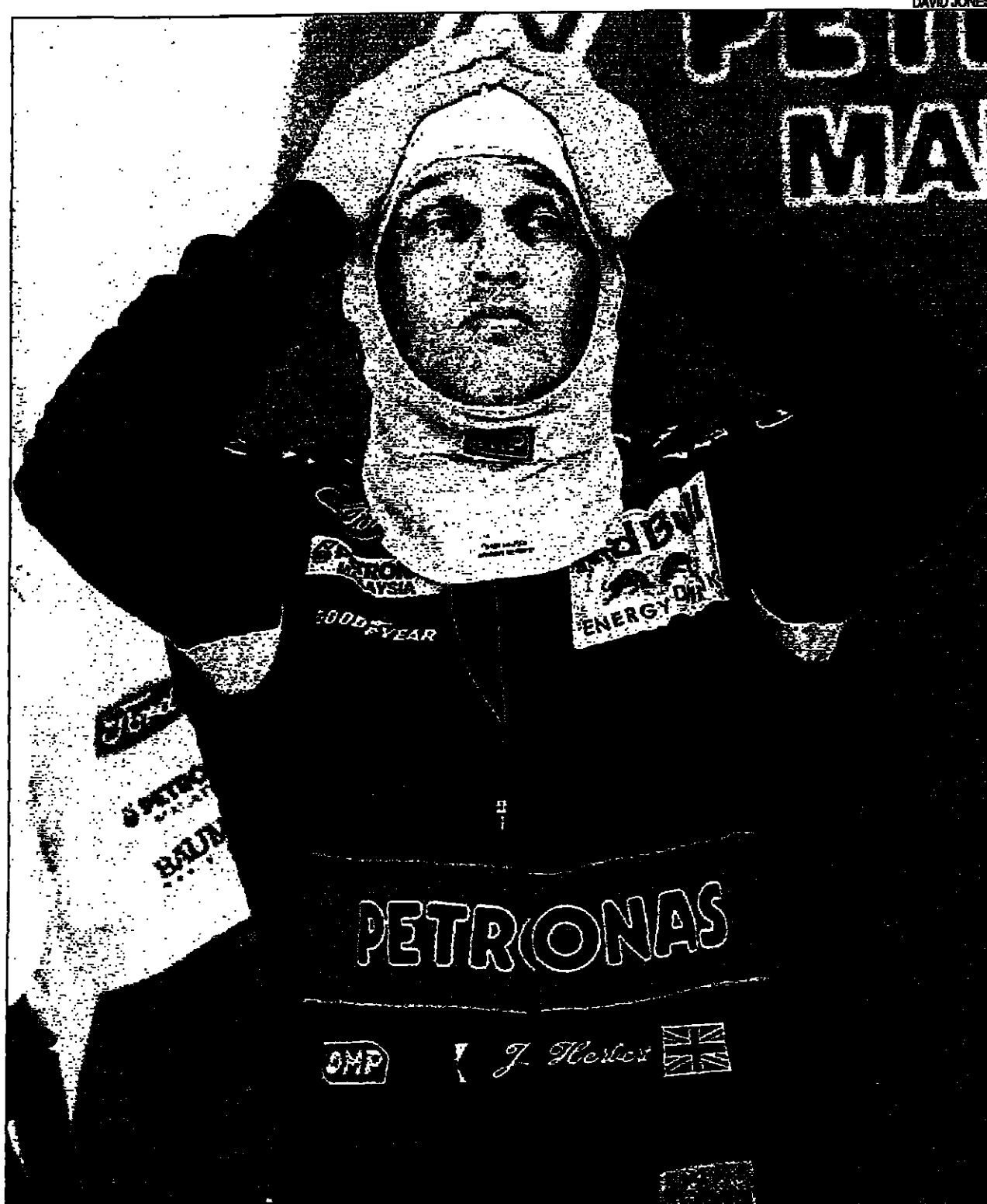
It ebbed away in the second half of a season of bitterness at Benetton, a season of playing second fiddle to Michael Schumacher, of trailing in his wake as the German went all out for his second consecutive title and the team lumped all their resources behind him.

After the win here, Herbert says, he spoke to Flavio Briatore, the Benetton managing director, just twice throughout the rest of the season. Once was when he won again, in Monza, then it was to tell him his contract would not be extended beyond the end of the year. At the end of a season when he had recorded the first two wins of his career, Herbert suddenly found himself searching desperately for a drive.

"What Briatore did harmed me a lot," Herbert said. "His behaviour within the team was totally unacceptable. In fact, it never was a team as far as I was concerned. I was never in it."

He kept smiling, but thought briefly about turning his back on Formula One and crossing the Atlantic to compete in the IndyCar series.

Then he beat Mark Blundell to the second seat at Sauber-Ford. It seemed as though he might have leapt out of the frying pan into the fire when he teamed up with Heinz-



Herbert gets ready for practice at Silverstone yesterday where he will hope to repeat last year's victory

Harald Frenzen, a driver who is supposed to have the potential to be even better than Schumacher, but Herbert is beginning to hold his own; his rehabilitation has begun. The latest stage of his seemingly never-ending attempt to prove himself is under way.

For a man who is constantly cheery, though, a driver who is the most popular in the grand prix community, unfailingly approachable and helpful, a cruel kind of logic swirls around Herbert, a lingering doubt about his ability that sometimes seems perverse in its persistence, a doubt that doggedly survives that rarest of commodities — grand prix victories.

"Sometimes, I find it hard to understand," Herbert said.

"Everybody knew Benetton was a one-car team when I went there but suddenly that all seemed to go quiet when I could not keep pace with Michael. People forgot to mention that I had not had any time in the car. Eddie Irvine is struggling as Michael's team-mate at Ferrari, too, but he does not get anything like the criticism I got."

"Now I am up against somebody who is supposed to be quicker than Michael and I am beginning to give him a run for his money. Hopefully, I will start outqualifying him soon. Then, probably, everyone will start saying 'oh, Frenzen is obviously not as good as we thought he was'. I hope not. I suppose that is negative thinking."

It got to a stage last season, though, where Herbert was even being criticised for being too cheerful. People said he needed to take the whole business more seriously, like Schumacher and Hill. Herbert, though, has not changed.

"I don't get fed up with the cheeky chappie image," he said, "because people know that when I am in the back of the motor home or in the debrief, that is when the happy, jokey side disappears. That is when you have to be damn serious about it."

"All the other stuff I do is to get rid of the pressure. Damon does it in a different way. When he is moody, that is how he copes with the pressure. But my way of doing it is

getting it out openly. That is why I am always laughing and joking."

There are glimpses of hope for the future, too, now. He has consolidated his position at Sauber and is talking to Jordan and the new Stewart grand prix team about drives for next year should the Swiss team not fulfil the criteria he has set out.

"It is worlds apart, the way I am treated here and how I was at Benetton," Herbert said. "It has been a good year for me because I have been allowed to get it back together. It is very fair here. I try to be a team driver. I want to come out on top but I don't want anything extra. I have been on the wrong end of that. I want to compete on equal terms."

Technology to the fore in race to cut corners

Andrew Longmore discovers how data is translated from the screen to the track

Seven backs hunch over seven computer screens, faces peer intently at cardiac graphs of many colours. If you want data, there is plenty to spare behind the partitions in the Jordan pit. Suspension loads, tyre pressures, brake temperatures, damper travel, gear changes, rev speeds. Every flex of the car, every twitch of the driver's nerve and flick of his foot are recorded, analysed, processed and stored. Every mistake is screened in technicolour glory. When Rubens Barrichello crashed at Imola two days before Ayrton Senna's death, the accelerator line shot off the graph. Andy Leech, the electronics wizard at Jordan, still has the copy pinned to his office wall.

When they talk about the glamour of Formula One, it is safe to assume that mainframes, gigabytes and telemetry are not part of the vocabulary. There is nothing glamorous about looking at a television screen for two hours and monitoring blips and squiggles. Except that the success of a Formula One team lies in the correct interpretation of every blip and every squiggle. As soon as a driver climbs out of his cockpit, his first stop is the computer station. How much will the squiggles reveal about the car and about him? Imagine getting your exam results every day.

"It was a bit spooky in the beginning," Martin Brundle said. "It makes you more honest. You can't come in and say this happened and that happened when you know it's you who cocked up. But you've got to treat the computer as your friend." Not all drivers do. Some refuse to have their own lap data transposed onto that of their team-mate for fear of losing face. Brundle has his ego under better control.

Yesterday morning, in the first practice session, the graph showed Brundle to be quicker down the straights and Barrichello quicker through the corners. The times showed the Brazilian to be faster overall, a source of frustration to the Englishman, who would dearly love to out-qualify his Jordan team-mate for his home grand prix. During the hour of peace between the two untimed sessions, Brundle consulted the screens and saw that he was losing time through Bridge, the right-hander.

"It's as clear as day that I'm not confident with my car through there. It's one of the all-time great corners, but if the back of the car is not with you, you're not going to be on

'As soon as a driver gets out of his cockpit his first stop will be the computer station'

the throttle. I knew it, but what I saw from the telemetry confirmed it." The steering graph shows Brundle to be sawing hard at the wheel, which suggests a lack of balance. For the second session, Jordan raised Brundle's car by 15 millimetres so that the undertray could work more efficiently. "I was three quarters of a second faster, much of it at Bridge," Brundle explained.

Sensors in the car allow information to be stored instantly in an electronics box and sent straight into the bank of computers back in the pits. Information is also downloaded via an infra-red signal at the end of every lap. At Silverstone, Jordan's home

track, the team has inside knowledge. "The car should be about 80 per cent right before the first session," Sam Michaels, one of Jordan's engineers, said. "We should be on the pace very quickly." But if interpretations differ, how much does he believe the driver, how much the computer?

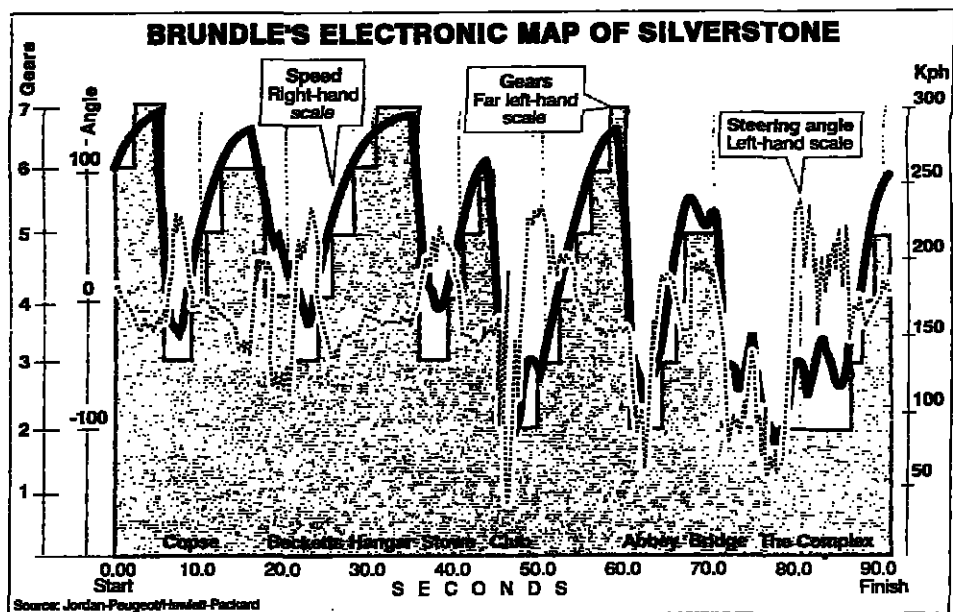
"You can lose a hundredth of a second and tell what happened straightaway," Michaels added. "The computer never lies, but it can't tell you how a car feels. Mostly it just backs up what the driver says. But you know when the driver has made a mistake." Geoff Banks is the coordinator for Hewlett-Packard, the computer solutions company, who has supplied the hardware

and the knowhow for the Jordan team since the start of the year. The investment in terms of money and manpower is incalculable, but for Banks the ability to test his company's products — and support services — at the furthest end

of the technological limit will be worth the price. Over the three days of a grand prix meeting, Hewlett-Packard has two specialists on 24-hour stand-by back at their headquarters in Bracknell.

"We're just like a pen or a calculator, just a way of doing business," Banks said. "We can provide all the information in the world, but if it's not going to make the car go faster then it's no use."

Yesterday evening, Brundle was still searching his telemetry for further glimpses of speed. "It's got to be at the end of the race, but at least you can make changes based on calculated data. It's hard work and sometimes it's bloody boring."



McLaren's revival bodes well for Coulthard and Hakkinen

If Hill doesn't win tomorrow, who will?
Oliver Holt looks at likely contenders

DAMON HILL compared the Formula One world championship to the Tour de France yesterday. He put himself in the lead role, clear of the peloton but looking back over his shoulder. And gradually, he said, he thought the pack would reel him in.

His rivals will try to start that process tomorrow in the British Grand Prix. Foremost among his challengers will be Jacques Villeneuve, his Williams-Renault team-mate, who has finished second to him four times already this season but the only other serious challenge is likely to come from Hill's arch-rival, Michael Schumacher.

The world champion's last two races have been ruined by mechanical problems, the latter before he had even reached the starting grid and Luca di Montezemolo, the Ferrari president, said yesterday that their first target was to "recuperate our reliability".

If that happens, Schumacher is capable of pushing Hill all the way. He has claimed pole position in each of the last two races so there are no problems with the raw speed of his car. He will also

be keen to gain his revenge over Hill for last year's accident at Silverstone, which the German believes robbed him of victory.

Jean Alesi, in his Benetton-Renault, could also be a danger despite his infuriating inconsistency. Despite some exotic mistakes this year, he has established himself as the leading driver in the team and is showing signs of gathering himself for a rally in the second half of this season.

He has completed endless miles of testing at Silverstone since his move to Benetton, which will give him the advantage of familiarity with the circuit that many of Hill's other challengers do not possess. "Every time we went out today, we improved," Alesi said after he had finished third in practice yesterday. "I am really, really happy."

In recent tests at Silverstone though, it is McLaren who has provided the sternest opposition to Williams, constantly edging closer to their

lap times. Mika Hakkinen, who is sixth in the world championship, has looked particularly impressive but David Coulthard could be more of a threat to Hill.

Last year, after the Hill-Schumacher crash, Coulthard overtook Johnny Herbert to take the lead in the later stages of the race but was denied what would have been his maiden victory by the imposition of a ten-second stop-go penalty that forced him into the pits.

After a shaky start this season, Coulthard's form has been impressive in recent races and he has overtaken his teammate in the championship. Coulthard, too, knows the circuit well and McLaren appear to be getting stronger slowly but surely.

The romantics will urge on Herbert after his triumph last year and his subsequent treatment by Benetton but it is more likely that his high-rated Sauber-Ford teammate, Heinz-Harald Frenzen, will

mount a challenge for a top three finish.

Frenzen's reputation has slipped recently after suggestions he had lost motivation with Sauber's lacklustre performances this season. Despite that, though, he is capable of producing results above the level of the car and the new competition with Herbert may spur the German into a high position.

Mika Salo is another in that category of promising drivers tipped to become future stars. He has been hamstrung by reliability problems with the Yamaha engine in his Tyrrell but has still attracted the attention of several top teams eager to sign the Finn.

Martin Brundle is finally starting to justify his £1 million salary at Jordan-Peugeot after a difficult start. He outqualified his teammate, Rubens Barrichello, a fortnight ago in France for the first time this season. He has promised to strip and sing *Danny Boy* on the podium if he wins. There is little chance of him having to take his clothes off; perhaps he will settle for socks and shoes if he makes it into the top three.

Menu eats into German's lead

By MARK FOGARTY

FRANK BIELA, the Audi driver, is becoming increasingly pessimistic about his chances of winning the *Auto Trader* British touring car championship, which just a couple of months ago it seemed he could not lose.

Biel, 31, of Germany, is worried that his dwindling lead will be further eroded in the twin rounds of the series this weekend at Silverstone.

The fifteenth round of the 25-race championship will be run late this afternoon, with the sixteenth immediately after the Formula One race tomorrow. Both events will be held over 15 laps of the 3.15-mile grand prix circuit.

Biel, winner last year of the World Cup, the unofficial touring car world championship, leads the championship by 44 points from Alain Menu, of Switzerland, but he has not won a race since the eighth round, also at Silverstone, on May 19.

He was so dominant early in the series, winning five of the first eight races, that Toca, the championship organiser, felt compelled to increase the weight handicap of his four-wheel drive Audi A4 to bring it back into the field.

For the past six races the Audis of Biela and his British team-mate, John Birtcliffe, have been carrying an extra 30 kilograms, increasing the weight difference between the A4 and the predominantly front-wheel drive opposition from 65kg to 95kg. Since the change, Biela has struggled.

He protests that the additional handicap was a case of "too much, too soon." "In the beginning of the series, the other teams were quite unprepared," he said. "I was really

surprised by how easy it was to win. The decision to add weight to our car was taken too soon. The other cars have improved a lot since the first few meetings."

However, few of Biela's rivals believe that his Audi is performing to its potential. Charges that Audi is "sandbagging" — deliberately running its cars slower than they are capable — to avoid a further 30kg weight penalty are widespread among opposing teams. However, Biela dismisses these accusations as sour grapes, maintaining that the A4 is genuinely disadvantaged in all but wet races.

"I promise you, at the last three meetings [six rounds], there has been no chance for us to win in normal conditions," he said. "If they [the other drivers] say different, they are wrong."

Biel rates Menu, runner-up for the past two years, as his main championship rival, with BMW's Joachim Winkelhock, also of Germany, and Volvo's Rickard Rydell, of Sweden, his next most serious threats. Of Menu, he said: "I think he's very, very dangerous. The Renault is definitely on another level [of performance], and the Volvo is in between the Renault and the BMW, which is on a similar level to Audi."

However, pole position for both this weekend's races was won by David Leslie, of Scotland, in his Honda Accord.

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (after 14 of 25 rounds): Drivers: 1. F. Biela (Audi) 140pts; 2. A. Menu (Renault) 115; 3. J. Winkelhock (BMW) 100; 4. R. Rydell (Volvo) 95; 5. J. Birtcliffe (Audi) 72; 6. S. R. Farnham (Audi) 72; 7. J. Birtcliffe (Audi) 69; 8. W. Hill (Audi) 62; 9. J. Thompson (Audi) 57; 10. K. Burt (Audi) 42. Manufacturers: 1. Audi 159pts; 2. BMW 146; 3. Renault 142; 4. Volvo 130; 5. Vauxhall 108; 6. Honda 77; 7. Peugeot 61; 8. Ford 44.



Waiting for a winning chance: Alesi, Hakkinen, Villeneuve, Salo and Coulthard all show the right signs

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Villeneuve's practice time leaves Briton unperturbed



Hill was at his most focused during the opening day of practice for the British Grand Prix at Silverstone yesterday. Photograph: Julian Herbert

Hill makes himself at home

By OLIVER HOLT

DAMON HILL wore the air of an emperor here yesterday. He usually sits on the steps of a Williams team trailer to give his press conference after practice; at Silverstone yesterday, he stood, towering above the whirling cameras in the sunshine. Sometimes he frets about not being on top of the time charts; yesterday, he was almost blasé about it. In the shadows, though, the conspirators were gathering.

The theatre was at its most colourful and mock-sinister at Ferrari. On the pit wall, Luca di Montezemolo, the team's president, stood with the white-haired Gianni Agnelli, the honorary president of Fiat, Ferrari's backers, to fête Michael Schumacher. When the world champion's car was wheeled back in to the garage after his last run, they prowled across the pit lane to confer with him.

Later, from the midst of a milling pack of journalists, di Montezemolo even indulged in a little light gamesmanship. Yes, he said, he knew Hill might be available at the end of the season, but no, he was not interested in bidding for his services. "There is no possibility for us even to think about Hill at Ferrari next season," he said.

Like all the most dangerous plots, though, the most unnerving threat to the Englishman came from within his own camp. Any illusion that Hill would walk to his second British Grand Prix victory

tomorrow and indulge a crowd that have come to crown him prematurely as the new world champion were destroyed by his team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve.

Hill will still be the favourite to claim pole position here today, both because of the support of the home crowd that he admits has become an advantage and because he has generally had the upper hand on his team-mate all season. A win here would be his third in succession and would, even by his own cautious standards, allow him to prepare to be crowned champion.

After Hill had led for most of both practice sessions either side of lunchtime, the young French-Canadian produced a blistering lap that was 0.7sec clear of anything the Englishman could muster. Villeneuve rubbed it in when he said he was disappointed with the performance of the car and that there was plenty of room for improvement.

Villeneuve, of course, has his own reasons for wanting to dethrone Hill here. At his home grand prix in Canada a month ago, Hill beat him to the first corner by blocking him as they roared off the starting grid and went on to complete a crushing victory. Someone asked if he would like to turn the tables on Hill on his own territory. "Sure, it would be nice," Villeneuve said with a grin.

"I was not happy with the car today, and it seemed to me that a lot of the testing we have done here was useless because the car felt so different. There is a lot of potential to improve. It is just a question of finding it."

Villeneuve arrived here on Thursday, a man with a point to prove. He has played second fiddle to his team-mate all season and recent rumours have suggested that Frank Williams, the Williams team owner, and Patrick Head, the team's technical director, have

become exasperated with his refusal to accept advice on how best to prepare his car and were considering dropping him at the end of the season.

The Canadian, the IndyCar champion, is still second to Hill in the championship, 25 points adrift, despite some performances that led Bernie Ecclestone, grand prix racing's impresario, to suggest last week that he was being constrained by team orders. Williams have refuted that suggestion time and again this week and did so once more yesterday.

Villeneuve, Head said, would be free to race Hill for victory in the 61-lap contest tomorrow. He has tested extensively here and is familiar with the track, a luxury he has not enjoyed at many other circuits this season, and Hill, who has won six of the nine races this season, said he expected his team-mate to be his fiercest opponent when the

lights go off to signal the start. "It seems as though he is trying to spoil the script," Hill said. "But it is down to me not to let that happen. I am keeping an eye on him. He is in there and he is a major factor. I will have to squeeze myself, squeeze every ounce of what I have to give out of myself, in order to beat him. But the whole atmosphere here is positive and I am feeding on it."

"Jacques's time was very impressive. I think that was him putting down his marker. There is a serious challenge there from him. Jacques is going to be a big threat this weekend. He knows the circuit and he is going to be my main challenger, more even than Michael. I think, if that is not tempting fate, Williams have quite clearly got an advantage here."

"Everything went very, very well for me during the practice sessions, though, so I have no complaints. The times on Fri-

day are never quite what they seem and we did some useful tests in both sessions. I am very pleased with the way everything is going. It was an excellent start to the weekend."

"We had Nick Faldo in the garage this morning, and he has just won his third US Masters title, and the England football team is back on form again, so it is up to me to keep it going here on Sunday. I fully intend to do that and I will be trying my best."

It was at Silverstone last year, of course, where Hill and Schumacher collided, sparking the feud between them that lasted for most of the rest of the season. Schumacher indulged in a little bit of needle on Thursday with some light-hearted banter about Hill's earning potential. Yesterday, though, especially in the presence of Agnelli, he was deadly serious.

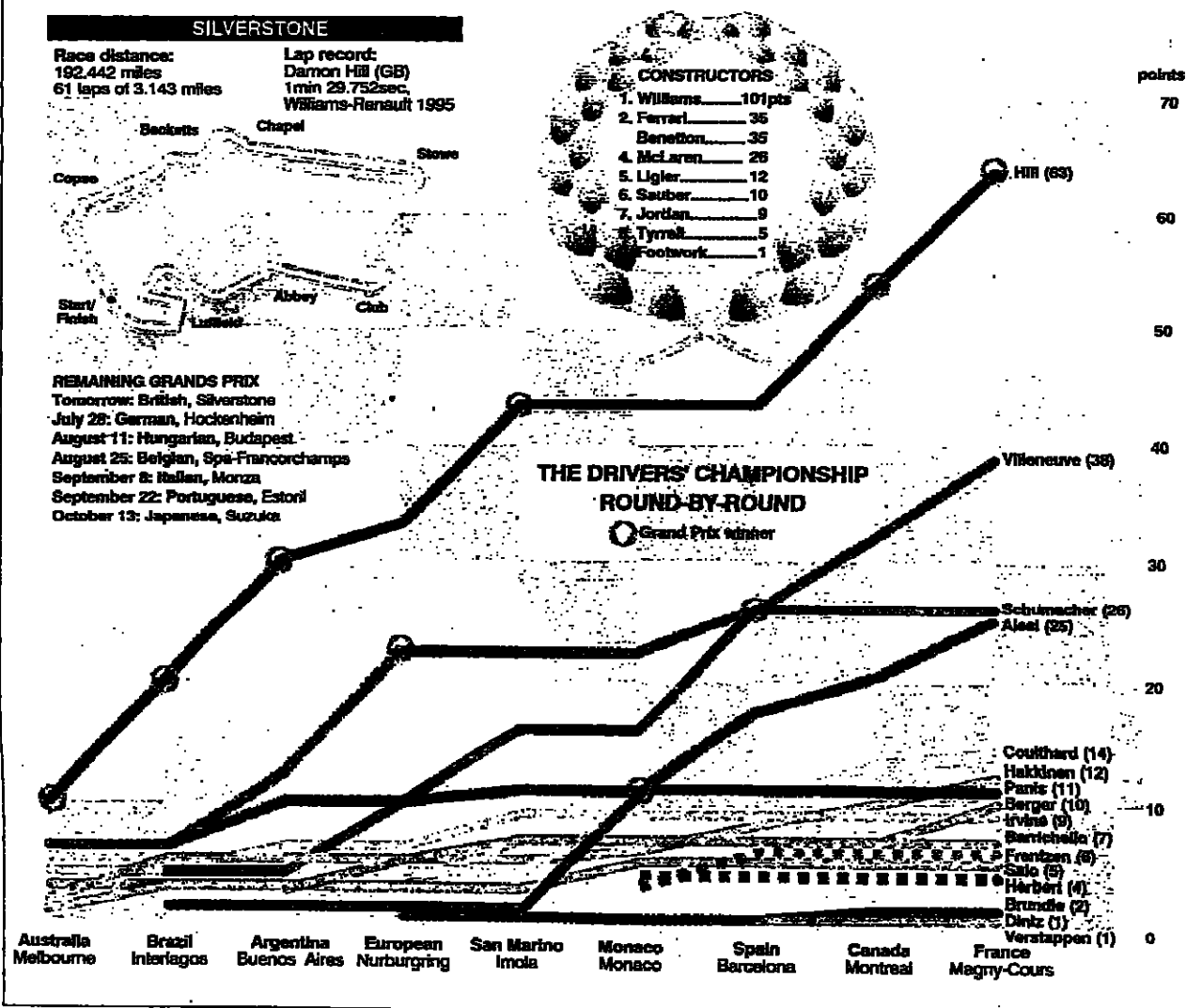
"Just as I expected, this is not an easy situation," Schumacher said, after he had finished in fifth place in practice, 0.5sec behind Villeneuve. "But we are not too far off the pace of the Benettons and even the Williams are not completely out of reach. We have a few ideas on how to modify the set-up of the car tomorrow and I think we can progress still further."

Back on his perch at the top of the trailer steps, Hill was asked for his thoughts about the collision with the German last year. "I don't remember last year," he said. "I have got a very bad memory for things like that."

PRACTICE

1. J. Villeneuve (Can, Williams) 1:28.241
 2. D. Hill (GB, Williams) 1:28.241
 3. J. Agnelli (Fr, Benetton) 1:28.364
 4. D. Coulthard (GB, McLaren) 1:28.417
 5. M. Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1:28.436
 6. M. Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren) 1:28.888
 7. G. Berger (Austria, Benetton) 1:29.013
 8. R. Barrichello (Br, Jordan) 1:29.137
 9. M. Brundle (GB, Jordan) 1:29.148
 10. O. Panis (Fr, Ligier) 1:29.236
 11. H-M. Frentzen (Ger, Sauber) 1:29.312
 12. E. Irvine (Ire, Ferrari) 1:29.458
 13. J. Verstappen (Hol, Footwork) 1:29.753
 14. M. Salo (Fin, Tyrrell) 1:30.888
 15. J. Harbeck (GB, Sauber) 1:30.459
 16. U. Katayama (Japan, Tyrrell) 1:30.828
 17. P. P. Diniz (Br, Ligier) 1:30.829
 18. R. Rosset (Br, Footwork) 1:31.032
 19. G. Fisichella (It, Minardi) 1:31.450
 20. P. Lamy (Por, Minardi) 1:31.661
- Did not take part
L. Badoer (It, Forti)
A. Montanari (It, Forti)

HILL'S DRIVE TOWARDS THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



REMAINING GRANDS PRIX

Tennessen: British, Silverstone
July 28: German, Hockenheim
August 11: Hungarian, Budapest
August 26: Belgian, Spa-Francorchamps
September 8: Italian, Monza
September 22: Portuguese, Estoril
October 13: Japanese, Suzuka



INSIDE

Last year's winner Johnny Herbert, above, on a turbulent 12 months

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The technological race to cut corners

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Jonathan Palmer's guide to the Silverstone circuit

Car 96

'Worst violence I have seen at a boxing match'

Srikumar Sen can recall nothing like the scenes just witnessed in New York

A riot between rival supporters marred the closing stages of the heavyweight boxing match between Riddick Bowe and Andrew Golota, of Poland, at Madison Square Garden, New York, early yesterday. The violence followed a fracas between the two corners after Golota had been disqualified in the seventh round for hitting low.

Running battles between rival groups wielding chairs and bottles raged in the ring and among the 11,000 spectators in the main body of the hall. It was only when the police arrived, after about 35 minutes of mayhem, that the crowd was brought under control. Golota's 70-year-old trainer, Lou Duva, collapsed at ringside with a heart attack and was taken to hospital. He was "comfortable" yesterday.

It was only when one saw New York State Athletic Commission officials watching the chaos helplessly before the police arrived that one realised there had been no ring-side or other security in the hall. The Garden really should have taken some measures to keep intruders out of the ring.

As Emanuel Steward, Lennox Lewis's trainer, said: "There have been so many fights involving Bowe that have ended in trouble. You will recall, in the first fight between Bowe and [Evander] Holyfield, [Rock] Newman [Bowe's manager] had a brush with a photographer at the end of the fight on the ring apron."

"Then there was the time in the second fight [in November 1993], which Holyfield won. I had to jump on Holyfield and throw him to the ground at the end of the fight to prevent trouble between his corner and Holyfield."

"There was also the time when Bowe was fighting Elijah Tillery and there was some sort of trouble between the two when Tillery was pushed up against the ropes. Newman jumped on the apron and grabbed him by the neck. The scenes were disgraceful and we're just lucky that no one was stabbed."

Bowe's supporters were clearly relieved by the disqualification as their man was

in severe trouble. At first, the 2,000 Poles, who had come from New Jersey and Brooklyn to support Golota in his magnificent effort against one of the world's top heavyweights, also appeared to accept the disqualification verdict philosophically.

Things might have passed off peacefully if Newman had not crossed over from his corner to admonish the loser, Alongside Newman was an oversized minder, who pushed Golota. The boxer, who is a fiery type, spun round and hit his assailant, who then clubbed the Pole with a cell telephone, drawing blood.

This incident was like a match to petrol as ringside passions were ignited. What followed was the worst incidence of violence I have seen at a boxing match. It was far worse than the riot at Wembley in September 1980, when Marvin Hagler beat Alan Minter, and the disturbances at the NEC in Birmingham in September 1994, when the

Low blows buckle Bowe ... 44
Tyson offer for Lewis ... 44

supporters of Steve Foster and Robert McCracken fought pitched battles.

Because of the racial polarisation of the hooligans, the disturbance had the ugly look of a race riot. Because of the disparity in numbers between black and white, 9,000 Bowe supporters to 2,000 Poles, the fights were generally one-sided as groups of troublemakers dragged down single Polish hooligans and set about them with their fists and boots in the manner of Joe Pesci in the movies.

I have no doubt that two Polish youths, who were pulled down in front of me, would have been kicked to death had some members of the public not intervened.

Michael Buffer, the MC, who was also the announcer at Stafford the day trouble broke out during a bout between Tony Simpson and Frank Tate, said: "Oh, Stafford was no big deal. The trouble was caused by somebody letting off a gas bomb. This was worse because it was a human wave with no one to stop it."

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GARDENING



Fabulously vulgar oriental poppies at Wisley

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Three luxurious courses, made in minutes

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GOING OUT

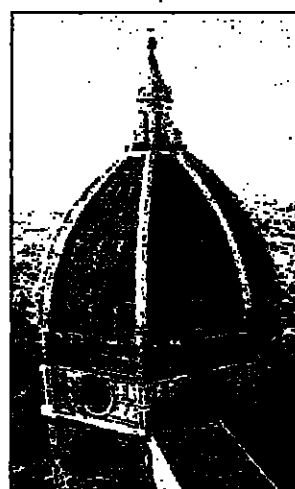


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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY JULY 13 1996

LE SPORT: WHEN IN FRANCE, DON'T DO IT



New Yorker
Adam Gopnik
works out the
uncomplicated
Parisian route
to fitness

Late last year, the French Government assembled a committee to select a name for the vast new stadium that is being built in a Paris suburb. The committee included an actor, an "artiste", some functionaries, and even a few athletes. They took a long time deliberating over their choice. At last, in December, the committee announced that it had come to a decision, and the Government decided to broadcast the verdict on television. The Minister of Youth and Sports cleared his throat to read the decision to the nation. The stadium that would represent France to the world, he announced, would be called (long, dramatic pause) *Le Stade de France* (The French Stadium). "Banal and beautiful at the same time," one journalist wrote. "Obvious and seductive. Timeless and unalterable."

It wasn't hard to detect, beneath the sturdy, patriotic surface of the new name, an undercurrent of ironic, derisory minimalism. The French are prepared to be formally enthusiastic about American-style stadiums and American-style sports, but they are not going to get carried away by it all. This realisation first came home to me when I joined a pioneer health club on the Left Bank and spent four months unsuccessfully trying to get some exercise there.

"An American gym?" Parisians asked when I said that I was looking for some place to work out, and at first I didn't know what to say. What would a French gym be like? Someone suggested that my wife and I join the Health Club at the Ritz — that was about as French as a gym could get. This sounded like a nice, glamorous thing to do, so we went for a trial visit. I ran out of the locker room and dived into the pool. White legs were dangling all around me — crowded to the edges, as though their owners were clinging to the sides of the pool in fear — and only after I rose to the surface did I see that the owners were all hanging from the edge of the pool, eating sandwiches

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INSIDE STORY

'Everyone ate crêpes and admired the untouched Nautilus machines'

COMSTOCK



Going for the burn: the American exercise regime focuses on hard work and self-denial in pursuit of the perfect contour. The French prefer organic chocolate truffles and applications of slimming lotion

Continued from page 1
off silver platters. Finally, after we'd done a lot of asking around, someone suggested a newly opening "New York-style" gym, which I'll call the Régiment Rouge. One afternoon, my wife and I walked over to see what it was like, and found it down at the end of a long, winding street. The gym was wedged into the bottom two floors of an institutional-looking Haussmann-era building. We went in and found ourselves surrounded by the virtuous sounds of Activity — sawing and hammering and other plaster-dust-producing noises. The *bruit* seemed to be rising from a cavern-like area in the basement. At the top of a grand-opera-style staircase that led to the basement were three or four fabulously chic young women in red tracksuits — the Régiment Rouge! — that still managed to be fairly form-fitting. The women all had ravishing long hair and lightly applied makeup.

When we told them that we wanted to *abonner* — subscribe — one of them whisked us off to her office and gave us the full spiel on the Régiment Rouge. It was going to bring the rigorous, uncompromising spirit of the New York health club to Paris — its discipline, its toughness, its regimental quality. They were just in the middle of having the work done — one could hear this downstairs — and it

would all be finished by the end of the month. The locker rooms, the *appareils Nautilus*, the stationary bicycles with electronic displays, the massage tables — everything would be not just à l'américaine but très New Yorkais. Best of all, she went on, they had organised a special "high intensity" programme in which, for the annual sum of Fr2,000 (about £266), you could make an inexorable New York-style commitment to your physique and visit the gym as often as once a week.

It was obvious that the once-a-week deal was the closer and that, though she had a million arguments ready for people who thought that when it came to *forme* once a week might be going overboard, she had nothing at all ready for people who thought once a week might not be *forme* enough.

We asked her if we could possibly come more often than that, and she cautiously asked us what we meant by "often". Well, three, perhaps four times a week, we said. It was not unknown, we added quickly, apologetically, for New Yorkers to visit a gym on an impulse, almost daily. Some New Yorkers, for that matter, arranged to go to their health club every morning before work. She echoed this cautiously, too: they rise from their beds and exercise vigorously before breakfast? Yes,

we said weakly. That must be a wearing regimen, she commented politely. She paused, and then she said, wonderingly, "Ah, you mean you wish to *abonner* for an infinite number of visits?" After much fooling around with numbers and hurried, hushed conferences with other members of the regiment, she arrived at a price for an infinity of *forme*. The difference between once a week and infinity, by the way, turned out to be surprisingly small, improvised prices being one of the unpredictable pleasures of Paris life. She opened dossiers for both of us; you can't do anything in France without having a dossier opened on your behalf.

A week later, I dug out my old gym bag, cranked up my Walkman, and set off for the Régiment Rouge. When I arrived, the young women in the red tracksuits were still standing there. They looked more ravishing than ever. I picked out our consultant from the group, and told her I was ready to get on *forme*. "Alas, the work continues," she announced. I peered down. The renovation seemed to have stopped just where it had been when I saw it before. "The *vestiaires* and the *appareils* will now be installed next month," she said. "However, we are having classes all week long, on an emergency basis, and the Régiment Rouge wishes to make you an award for your patience." Then she gave me a bag of chocolate truffles. (There is a health-food store on the Rue du Bac that displays its own brand of chocolates and its own marque of champagne. "Tout Organique!" a sign alongside them proclaims virtuously.) I ate one.

A week after that, we got a phone call from our consultant. She proudly announced that things were ready at last, and there would be a *crêpe party* in honour of the opening. "We will have apricot jam and *crème de marrons*," she explained. We went to the *crêpe* party. Everyone — would-be members and the girls in the red tracksuits — walked around eating stuffed *crêpes* and admiring the pristine, shiny, untouched Nautilus machines and exercise bikes and free weights.

A few days later, I went back again to try to use the gym, but on my way in to the regimen room I was stopped by another of the girls in red tracksuits. Before one could start work on the machines, she explained, it was necessary that one have a rendezvous with a *professeur*. When I arrived the next day for my rendezvous, the *professeur* — another girl in a red tracksuit — was waiting for me in the little office. She had my dossier out, and she was reviewing it seriously.

"Aren't we going to demonstrate the system of the machines?" I asked.

"Ah, that is for the future. This is the oral part of the rendezvous, where we review your body and its desires," she said. If I blushed, she certainly didn't. She made a lot of notes, and then snapped my dossier shut and said that soon, she hoped, we could begin.

While all this was going on, I tried to tell Parisians about it, and I could see that they couldn't see what, exactly, I thought was strange. The ab-

DREAM CREAM

THE WINNING combination of witchcraft and white-coated science brings French women into pharmacies by the million, equipped only with wads of cash and a willingness to believe that the phrase "slimming cream" is not an oxymoron.

Every pharmacy gives up about a quarter of its shelf space to bust-lifting creams, thigh-reducing milks, cellulite eliminators and flat-stomach gels. These creams, which are a passing amusement abroad, are an accepted method of body-improvement here, far less painful than *slimming* or the gym.

They are sold in all seriousness by the white-uniformed saleswomen, who go into seemingly scientific detail discussing the merits of each potion. It is witchcraft of a very modern sort, rooted in the belief of medicine and the convincing statistics and graphs provided as justification. The price — from £10 to £30 a tube — and aseptic packaging help buff the illusion.

The French spend five times as much on drugs as the British, and every street has its flashing green cross. My own short street has five pharmacies.

In order to test unscientifically the claims of the various slimming creams, I recruited two French women and a control group of two British women, all edgy about bust droop and cellulite. Biotherm, Dior, Clarins and Vichy all offered up their finest, and the women were sent to work.

Within days, extraordinarily, the two Frenchwomen were reporting improvements in firmness and skin softness. The British thought the creams "smelled nice", but saw no physical effects. This situation continued throughout the trial. One Frenchwoman's husband complained that "it is like going to bed with a snail. There is a trail of slimy cream every night."

Perhaps they were reading the packaging, with added psychological results. We translated some of the blurbs. Vichy Cellactia, a cellulite-correcting gel, "visibly reduces the 'orange-peel' effect", and sold 420,000 tubes in France last year. Some claims are rather mysterious: "Clarins Slimming Body Lift has, in one application, the same benefits as an hour and a half of walking in cold water."

Others promise to reduce "rebellious curves", but constant vigilance is necessary. Take Clarins Lait Jambes Lourdes — heavy leg milk. "Always have it in your drawer at work, because you can even apply it on top of thin thighs."



The British-French debate: expensive slimming lotions versus egg white

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In the end, the French continued rubbing, while the British gave up: "Might as well spread egg white on your stomach and let it dry, you get the same effect," said one.

The French phrase "*bien dans sa peau*" used to mean comfortable with oneself, happy. But for many women this phrase is taking on increasingly literal connotations.

KATE MUIR

right speed for window-shopping on the Boulevard Saint-Germain on an especially sunny day when your heart is filled with love and your pockets are filled with money — it was as though she had set the machine at "saunter".

I got down from my bike perspiring right through my T-shirt — the first person on the Left Bank, I thought proudly, to break a sweat at a gym. I walked back to the desk. "A towel, please," I panted (in French, of course). The girl in the red tracksuit at the desk gave me a long, steady, opaque look. I thought that maybe I had got the word for towel wrong (I hadn't, though), and after I asked again and got the same look in return I thought it was time to try to describe its function.

My description sounded like a definition from Dr Johnson's dictionary: that thing which is used in the process of removing water from the surfaces of your body in the moments after its immersion. "Ah," she said. "Of course. A towel. We have none yet." She looked off into the middle distance. "This," she said at last, "is envisaged." I looked at her dumbly, pleadingly, the reality dawning on me. Then I walked all the way home, moist as a chocolate mousse.

A couple of days later, I went for what I thought would be my last visit to the Préfecture de Police to get my *carte de séjour*, a process that had involved a four-ministry work-out stretching over three months. The functionary seemed ready to give it to me — she was actually holding it out across the desk — but then she suddenly took one last look at the dossier the Préfecture had on me, and noticed something that she had somehow missed before.

"Alors, monsieur," she said, "you have not yet had a physical examination to make sure that you are in sufficiently good health to remain in France."

I didn't know what to say. "I belong to a gym," I said at last, and I showed her my card from the Régiment. "Well," she said, "this will be useful for your dossier." I couldn't argue with that.

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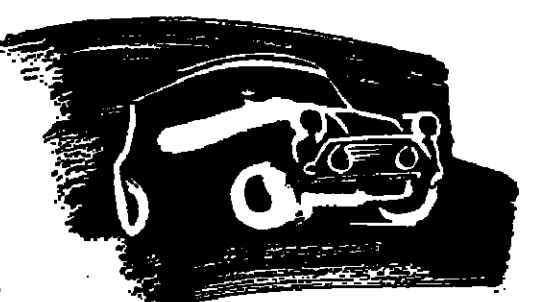
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SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND?



MINI

Pasties by post



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FOOD

3

Despite the weather, you can still have a successful picnic. All you need is a little red wine, two glasses and a shooter's sandwich

Eat, drink and get rained on

Were picnics invented for pleasure or punishment? I suspect the latter. Or, at least, they were invented to teach us the futility of expectations. Because we picnic a couple of times a year at the most, we want it to be as special as Christmas, only with swallows swooping, wood-pigeons cooing, dappled sun streaming across distant hills and all that idyllic twaddle. You and I know it is never like this.

If all this sounds unduly pessimistic, let me explain that in the matter of picnics I carry deep scars. From childhood I remember attempted roadside feasts on the way to Bridlington where the old family Standard 8 would be coaxed into a gateway, a meths stove lit (if we had remembered the matches) and tea "mashed" (if we had remembered the tea). There would then begin a ponderous frying of bacon and eggs which, because of the feeble meths burner, would have been quicker using a magnifying glass and focusing the rays of the sun. If there had been any sun.

When the contents of the pan had finally succumbed to the paltry flame,

they were placed between two slices of bread and the first sandwich ritualistically handed to Grandfather. On every single occasion his first bite broke the runny yolk of the egg which, under pressure, burst from between the slices in vivid spurts of yellow and with the efficiency of a smart missile, came to rest on his cardigan front. There was a row: every time, every picnic, every trip to Bridlington.

Forty years on, picnics are no different, except that I am now the victim. I will spare you the details of a recent one taken on a threatening evening, allegedly in summer, when the wicked east wind piled sand on my sandwich as if it were trying to recreate the Goodwins, and a downpour forced us to retreat into a pathetic huddle, eating strawberries and cream in a stale bus shelter as if we had no good home to go to. I hate picnics. Except that I have just been taken to

Glyndebourne, prime venue for *haute pique-niqueurs*, and I suddenly realise where I have been going wrong. It rained, of course, so our hosts' feast of pheasant terrine, new potatoes and raspberries was held sitting at a table in a large tent. This suited me fine, and left time to walk around afterwards watching other people.

Whereon it became clear why some picnics work and others do not. Those who had brought everything bar the kitchen sink were having an arduous time, setting tables, folding napkins, putting roses in unstable vases, prising open Tupperware boxes. By the time the table was laid the bell was ringing for the third act and, such was

the hurry, what they really needed was McDonald's.

The happiest picnickers, it seemed to me, were two elderly ladies sitting at a sparsely spread table. They started with a glass of chilled white wine, enjoyed one substantial but not indelicate sandwich and, having emptied the wine glasses, placed a teaspoon in each to absorb the heat and filled them with hot water from a flask to which they added a teabag taken from a tin bearing a youth-

ful picture of Princess Margaret. No fuss, no spillage, no wasting up, no laden bags to lug back to cars, no rows. So here is my suggestion for my perfect picnic: simple, requiring no more than unwrapping, yet sustaining through the

remove one end of the loaf and burrow out enough bread to make a nest for the steak. Spread the inside of the hole with the rich pâté.

When the steak is cooked, salt and pepper it, and roll it, if it is thin enough (here you can be inventive and roll into it a little chopped fried onion or garlic), and spread very thinly with horseradish. Slip it into the nest, replace the cut end of the loaf and no one will know it is there.

Wrap the loaf in a clean tea cloth and tie it tightly with string; and then place between two stout pieces of wood, like two breadboards. Add weights, and more weights, and press for at least half a day.

All you need for your picnic is one bag in which you carry a couple of glasses, a bottle of stout red wine, your pressed loaf and a sharp knife. If you also want tea, take teabags and a Thermos of hot water. Do not forget the teaspoon, otherwise your glasses will crack. Remember the milk and, only as a last resort, employ a teacaddy bearing any figure other than that of a member of the Royal Family. And please, no rows.



PAUL HEINEY

HOME MADE

Pasties by post

UNTIL RECENTLY, anyone who has developed a deep affection for traditional Cornish pasties has had trouble tracking down the real McCoy. Thankfully, relief is at hand because a number of Cornish pasty makers are now offering their wares by mail order.

Granny Pasties of Falmouth will send you not only a box of pasties but a bottle of champagne to drink with them. (I would have thought a six pack of real ale was more likely to appeal to your average pasty-lover but maybe Granny knows best.)

Before you get too carried away by visions of little old ladies up to their elbows in chopped potato and swede, I



FIONA BECKETT

DIGEST

should warn you that the Granny's range contains a number of un-Cornish specialties such as Indian chicken, Mexican beef, apple, rhubarb and custard, and chocolate and banana.

But how, you may wonder, do you tell them apart? The system is that each pasty is marked with either knife or fork holes or both: for instance, one knife hole for a traditional pasty, three fork holes for a cheese and onion. Fine in theory, except that the contents tend to ooze out of the partly-cooked pasty, so you may have difficulty telling if it's a fork or a knife mark. You could confidently bite into a chocolate and banana only to find yourself with a mouthful of curried chicken.

Having sampled the range without incident, my advice would be to stick to the traditional version (though the

chocolate and banana was surprisingly good with a spoonful or two of Marks & Spencer toffee pecan ice-cream). I also liked the cheese and onion, and bacon, leek and cheese. A box of ten costs from £16 upwards, depending on the pasty. Ring 01326 312551 for details.

Spruce juice

SUMMER SALES are always a good opportunity to pick up kitchen gadgets at knockdown prices. The one we should all be going for, according to *Juice High* (Ebury Press £6.99) by raw-food guru Leslie Kenton, is a juicer.

Juicing hasn't really caught on in Britain (though you can get centrifugal carrot and apple juice at the Ritz) but, according to Ms Kenton, we're all missing out: "Ten minutes after the first glass the energy rush hits — the head clears, vision becomes sharper, the abdomen tightens and finger tips tingle."

I wish I could say that my abdomen had tightened after a glass of what Ms Kenton quaintly calls Merry Belon (melon and berries) but years of indulgence can't be eradicated in five minutes.

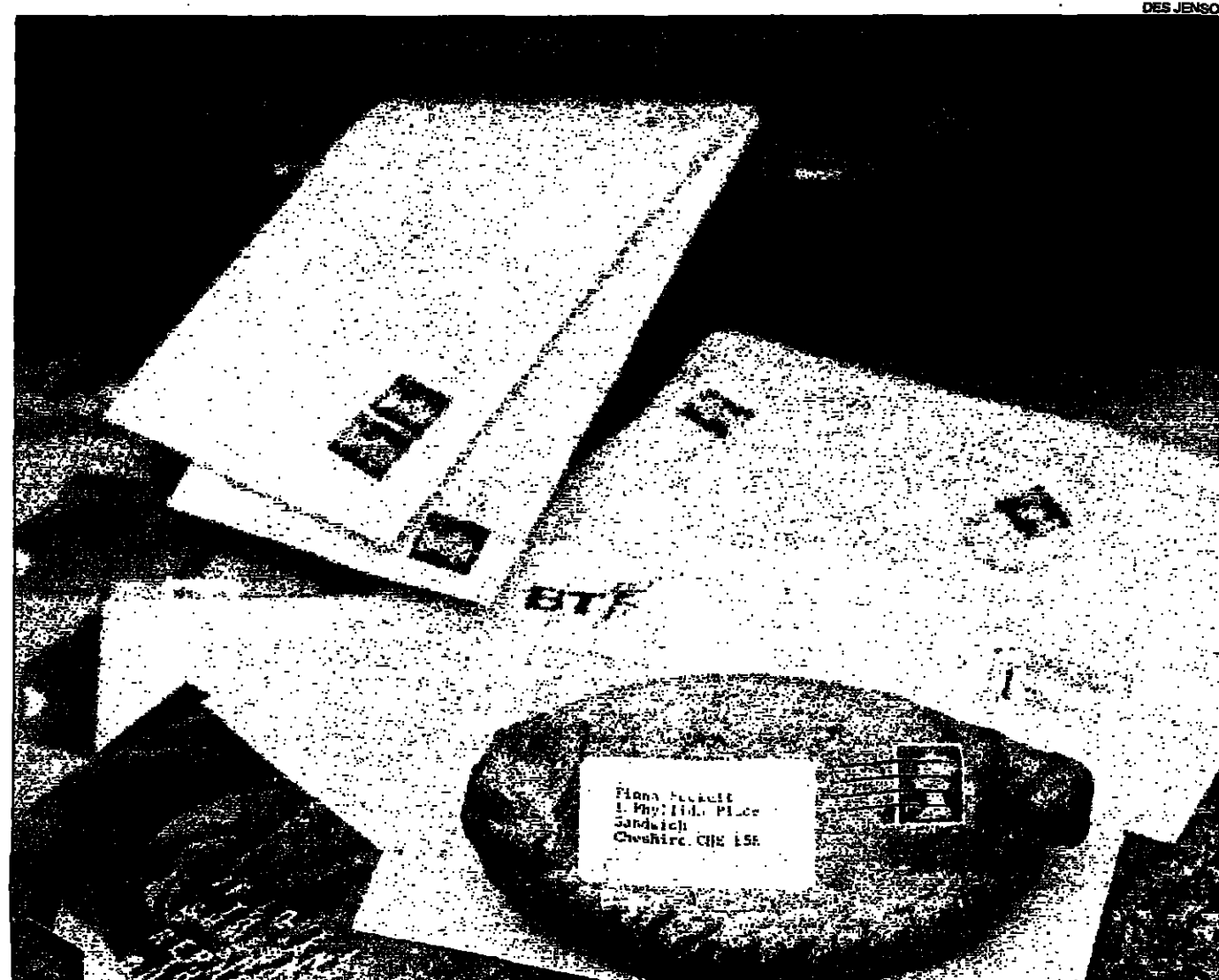
Iced to a T

WE MAY NOT have taken to juicing but apparently we're increasingly keen on iced tea, which increased its sales by 22 per cent last year, according to recent research by Zenith International.

The popularity of iced tea is a mystery to me, as many of these new products taste nothing like tea at all. Whatitards, for example, has brought out an instant peach melba tea and summer pudding-flavoured teabags. I can only assume that people who pay £3.49 for six teabags have been seduced by the packaging. If you want to make your own iced tea you might like to take a tip from *Drinks Without Liquor*, an American recipe book. Make your tea double the normal strength, infuse for five minutes, strain, chill, then top up with 7-Up. Serve over ice and garnish with lime or lemon slices.

Use your loaf

ONE OF THE major problems for Francophiles wanting to join their French brethren in celebrating Bastille Day



Stamp of approval: Cornish pasties are now available by post in flavours such as Indian chicken, and chocolate and banana

tomorrow is how to find a decent baguette. Despite the fact that many of the supermarkets now offer bread made from French flour, they never taste quite right — they're either too gungey or light and tasteless.

I explored the reason for this with Remy Georgelin, head baker at Baker and Spice, a classic French bakery in Knightsbridge which produces bread that makes you weep with pleasure. There is, as you might expect, no simple answer — just the small matter of 100-year-old ovens, the right raw materials, the flexibility to react to climatic conditions and a baker prepared to work 16 hours a day.

If you can get to Baker and Spice at 46 Walton Street, London SW3, you can pick up your baguettes, together with some fabulous French pastisseries, tomorrow morning —

though it being a busy weekend for the French I would ring to place your order on 0171-589 4734. Otherwise, like me, you'll just have to wait until you next go to France.

Bootiful lolly

TWO MONTHS into the barbecue season and exciting new "barbecue-ready" products are still arriving on the supermarket shelves. Tesco has managed to outdo even Bernard Matthews by coming up with turkey lollipops — "chopped and shaped turkey with a Southern-fried flavour coating". Although the label details the 24 ingredients the lollies contain it doesn't advise whether you should suck or nibble them. Frankly, it doesn't bear thinking about.

More food and drink in the Magazine

Indulge in a luxury spread

FAST FOOD

FEELING-RICH DINNER

Serves six

Champagne
Smoked salmon with mustard and dill sauce
Warm scallop, parma ham and spinach salad
Plums with amaretto, mascarpone and pecan nuts

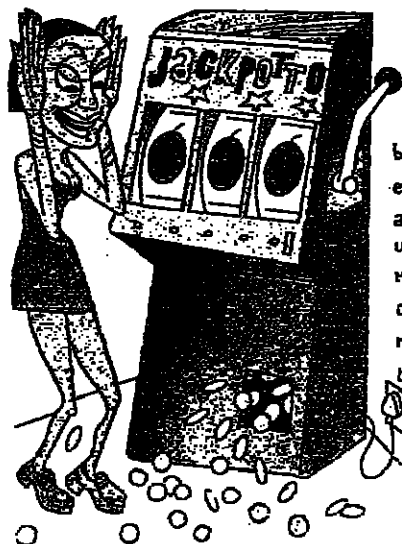
Fast entertaining is easy if you can do some quick work with your cheque book or credit card. Buy lavish amounts of wonderful ingredients, prepare them simply and open the champagne to give the meal a lift from the start. You can cook this luxurious dinner after a hard day earning the money to pay for it.

■ Prepare plums

Pre-heat oven to 200C/400F/gas mark 6. Mix 250g/9oz mascarpone cheese with 1½tbs amaretto liqueur (or brandy). Refrigerate. Cut 12 plums in half. Pull out any stones that come away easily. Put the plums in a presentable baking dish and sprinkle with 6tbs demerara sugar. Cook in the oven for 20 minutes. Leave in the oven to keep warm.

■ Prepare warm salad

Divide 400g/14oz ready-washed baby spinach between six plates. If using unprepared, larger spinach leaves, wash them carefully, take out any tough stalks and tear up very large leaves. Cut 100g/4oz parma ham into strips and arrange over the spinach. Cut 24 scallops in half to get two thinner discs from each one. Refrigerate until ready to cook. Squeeze a lemon. Crush a clove of garlic.



Measure out 150ml/¼ pint olive oil. Put the lemon, garlic and olive oil next to the cooker.

■ Prepare salmon

Put a generous helping of salmon on each plate. If you are in a rush, you could serve the salmon just with quarters of lemon and freshly ground pepper. Or make this dill and mustard dressing: mix together 1tbs sherry or wine vinegar, 1dsp sugar, 1tbs Dijon mustard and a few grinds of black pepper. Stir in 150ml/¼ pt single cream. Snip up a large bunch of dill into the dressing and mix. Let the guests spoon the sauce next to their salmon.

■ After the first course

Hear up 1tbs olive oil in a large frying pan until very hot. Put the scallops (including the orange roe) in the pan and cook for 30-

Shopping list

Fruit and vegetables
12 ripe plums
400g/14oz spinach
1 lemon
1 clove garlic
handful dill
Meat, fish and dairy
100g/4oz parma ham
24 fresh scallops
350g/12oz smoked salmon
250g/9oz mascarpone cheese
150ml/¼ pint single cream
Savoury and sweet goods
150ml/¼ pint olive oil
1tbs sherry or wine vinegar
1dsp white sugar
80g/3oz pecan nuts
6tbs plus a bowlful demerara sugar
Drinks
1½tbs amaretto liqueur (or brandy)
Champagne, white wine

40 seconds on each side. Scatter them over the spinach and bacon. Turn off the heat under the pan. Put the lemon juice in the pan and quickly stir the pan juices into the lemon as it sizzles. Add the garlic and the olive oil. Let it bubble for around a minute. Pour the warm, garlicky, lemony dressing over the salad on the plates and toss lightly. Season with a little black pepper.

■ Serve pudding

Scatter the pecans over the plums (you can easily take any stones left out of the cooked plums). Put the warm plums, the cold amaretto mascarpone and a bowl of demerara sugar on the table. Let the guests help themselves. The mascarpone will melt slightly on the plums.

HATTIE ELLIS

Chocolate Box

WHAT IS THE finest chocolate in the world? Personally, I'd always been a Mars Bar man. But not any more. Now I've got much grander ideas. I like to sniff and chew, ponder, savour and pronounce on texture, flavour and aftertaste.

If I preach with the zeal of a convert, then forgive me. I exposed my plebeian taste buds to a high priestess of the cocoa bean, Chantal Coady, a writer of choc-busters and owner of Rocco Chocolates in King's Road, west London. She rates the Grand Cru chocolates produced by Valrhona in the Rhone Valley as the standard others must aspire to. I popped in for a tasting.

The secret of these superior dark and milk bars, which are scrutinised by a team of full-time French tasters, is that they are made from the rarest beans from exclusive plantations in Madagascar, and the like, and contain 60-70 per cent cocoa solids. It was these tasters and their allies in the exclusive Club de Croqueurs de Chocolat (Chocolate Crumblers' Club) who last week were outraged over EU member states being allowed to replace cocoa butter with — *sacre bleu* — vegetable fat.

SAMPLING THREE of the Grand Cru bars I would never have said that the manjar had raspberry notes, or that the cazeibe was bursting with the flavours of almonds and green tea, as Ms Coady discerned. But I could enjoy the explosive fruitiness of one, the sensual smoothness of another and was, by the end, dismissing the third as too bitter. After these subtle offerings another manufacturer's 100 per cent chocolate was so rich it almost made me gag and I could tell immediately when I came across a cheap high street impostor.

Back in the office I handed out chunks of Valrhona like a missionary — with mixed success. "Ah, yes, a most impudent fruitiness," proclaimed one instant convert. "Yes, just like Terry's Chocolate orange," said one philistine.

DAMIAN WHITWORTH

■ 85g bars of Valrhona chocolate cost £3.25. A tasting box (300g) is £25 and 1kg paving slabs are £20. From Rocco Chocolates, 321 Kings Road, London SW3 (0171-352 5857).

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GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q The two-year-old grape vine in my greenhouse is now covered in small bunches of grapes. I am feeding and giving plenty of water. Do I thin the bunches, and do I thin the grapes on the bunches? Do I prune back each year?

Mr W. Pallett, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire.

A Yes to everything. Reduce the bunches (ideally in June) to one every foot or so of stem, evenly spread. Thin out the berries by about two-thirds, to leave the best. Keep humidity levels high during the day and keep air circulating constantly. Lack of air leads to mildew, which is extremely difficult to fight off. Once the berries are fully swollen, close the vents a little more to increase temperatures for ripening, and go easier on the water. In autumn and winter, once the fruits are cut, give full ventilation again. Prune back to a framework of "rods" when the leaves have fallen. It would pay you to buy a book on vine cultivation. Growing is not difficult, but it is good to have the rule book to hand.

Q My clivia produced spectacular orange flowers for ten years and then stopped. I divided it and put the pieces into three pots, but they have not flowered since. Where did I go wrong? Have they just come to the end of their flowering cycle? — Mr D. Aylward, Barton on Sea, Hampshire.

A Clivias like to be pot bound, and as long as you feed them during active growth with liquid tomato

food, they flower every spring for ever until they burst their pot. Division sets them back considerably, but they usually flower again the next year. They are not fussy about soil. Water generously through the summer, and keep them quite dry during the winter months. A winter temperature as low as 50°F/10°C encourages flowering. They can be stood outside for the summer in a shady place. If you cut the leaves back, they bleed like jugular veins. Feed your plants, keep them cool and dry in winter, and be patient.

Q Some of my daffodils and tulips have changed colour from yellow to cream when planted from pots out into the garden. Can you explain this? — Mrs H.M. Porteous, Brewood, Staffordshire.

A Several possibilities here. If you pick daffodils and tulips in early bud, they are slightly paler in the vase than they would be outdoors. They also fade more slowly. But also, some varieties of tulip can change over the years. The apricots can turn pink or creamy. Paleness may otherwise be a symptom of virus infection, root damage, or damage by weevilkillers.

Q Readers wishing to have gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1, Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. We regret that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.



The sunken garden at West Dean in Sussex, where the kitchen garden is a particular attraction. There is also a 300ft pergola and an arboretum to explore

A visual feast of edible plants

West Dean Gardens, West Dean, Nr Chichester, Sussex (01243 811303)

Five miles north of Chichester, on A286. Open: March to October, daily, 11am-5pm (last entry 4.30pm). Entrance: £3, children £1.50.

Kitchen gardens, whether made from new or recreating an old original, are the height of fashion at the moment and anyone looking for advice or inspiration cannot do better than visit West Dean. The restored walled gardens were formally opened last year, demonstrating a combination of craftsmanship and planting flair that matches the original work a century ago. In 1891 the wealthy American William James purchased the West Dean estate and set about transforming it into the acme of Edwardian comfort. Edward VII, who stayed often, sent the first transatlantic telegraph from the house's library. The walled gardens were equipped with an array of glasshouses and virtually all the originals have been painstakingly restored. The

lower walled garden contains a comprehensive collection of fruit trees planted in plots divided by paths and herbaceous borders. A delightful circular flint-and-thatched apple store stands against one wall. The upper kitchen garden has vegetable varieties that were commonplace at the turn of the century but are now hardly known. Period "extras" such as Victorian clothes all add to the effect. The glasshouses are overflowing with plants ranging from ferns to melons and hot-house exotics and the standard of their restoration emphasises how heavy a loss the widespread dereliction and demolition of such buildings has been in recent years. Elsewhere there is a 300ft pergola built by the fashionable Edwardian designer Harold Peto and from the front of the house there is the view up an unforgettable sweep of the South Downs, where the energetic can discover the arboretum.

South Luffenham Hall, South Luffenham, Leicestershire (01780 720034)

On B6121 between Stamford and Uppingham, off A41. Open: July 14, 2pm-6pm. Entrance: £1.50, children 50p.

From the outside, South Luffenham must be many people's ideal country house: Carolan, built in 1670, unaltered and not too large. It makes a breathtaking centrepiece for the garden that the present owners have been enhancing since they came here last year, retaining the essential formality suited to the house. In the large, stone-walled garden a terrace

along one side overlooks recently renewed lawn and a deep herbaceous border extends the length of one side wall to the foot of a huge spreading copper beech. This is only one of the mature trees that do so much to enhance the garden's appearance, adding — with views out to the village church next door — an air of establishment to younger planted limes, shrub and rose borders, and lilies.

Inveresk Lodge Garden, Nr Musselburgh, East Lothian (0131 665 1859)

South of Musselburgh and six miles east of Edinburgh, off A6124. Open: April 1 to September 30, Mon-Fri, 10am-4.30pm, Sat and Sun 2pm-5pm; October to March 1, Mon-Fri, 10am-4.30pm, Sun 2pm-5pm. Entrance: £1 (honesty box). After the National Trust for Scotland had been presented with



The lodge and garden at Inveresk, East Lothian

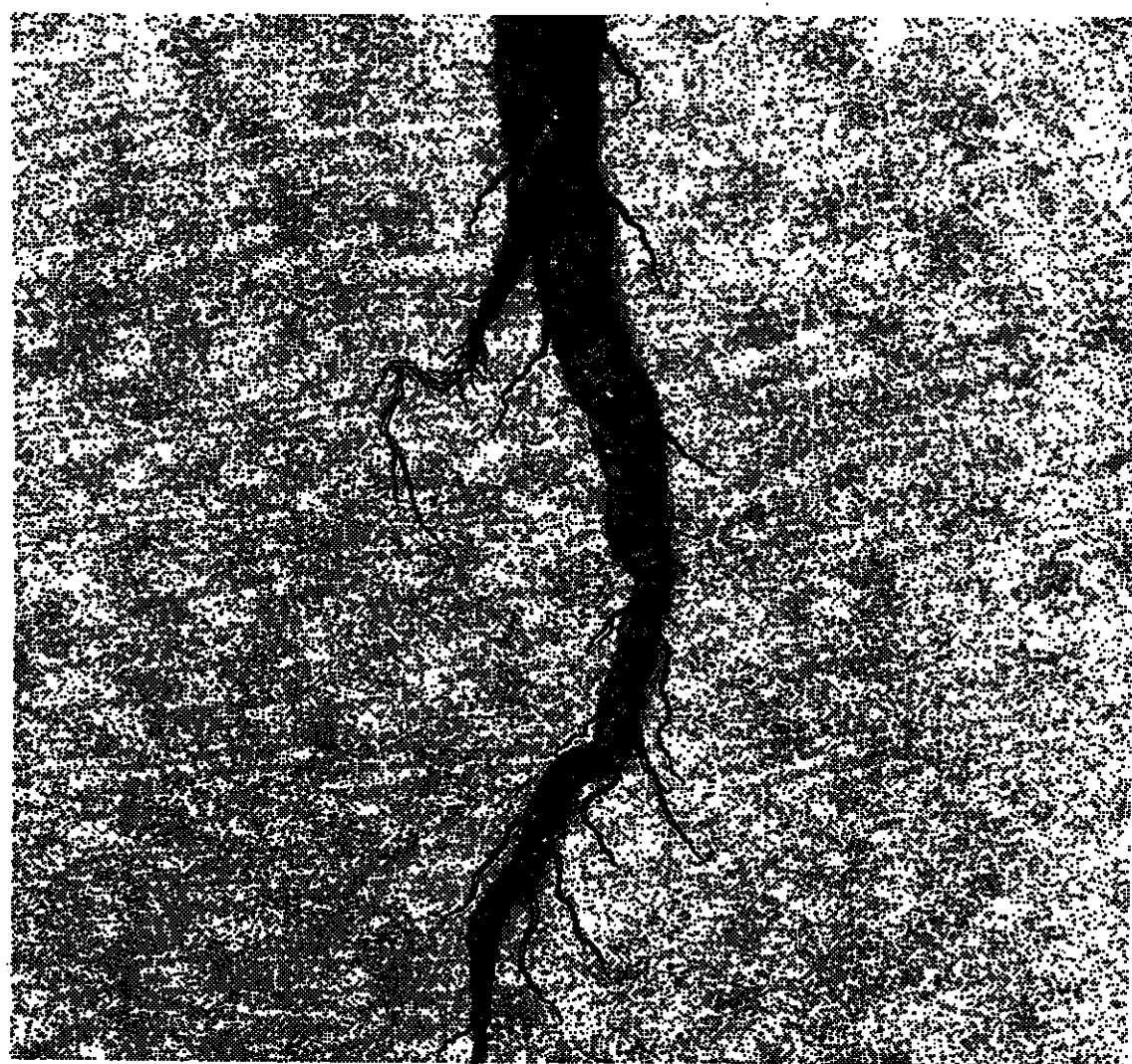
Inveresk Lodge in 1959 they carried out extensive restoration and replanting of the garden. But it was only after the work was complete that a plan from 1851 was discovered, which showed a design with fascinating similarities to their work. The 17th-century lodge is the largest of the group of 17th and 18th-century houses which make the village one of the most delightful in Scotland. Although the garden extends to 13 acres, its style is appealingly small-scale, especially in the walled garden, where grass paths slope gently between a range of well-planted borders. The shrub rose border was designed by Graham Stuart Thomas, but is only one among a range of subtle planting attractions — including a raised pear bed for apples, some impressive foliage plants such as euphorbias and melianthus, and ornamental flowering trees — all of which account for the garden's quality.

Hovingham Gardens, Hovingham, North Yorkshire (01653 628109)

In Hovingham village, on B1257 between Malton and Helmsley. Open 14 July, 1pm-5pm. Entrance: £2.50 (for all gardens), children free.

Although it is a busy road that passes through the centre of Hovingham, the village manages to retain an unspoilt appearance thanks to the quality of its limestone houses with distinctive red pantries. Tomorrow afternoon a selection of ten open their gardens in aid of the village church and present enjoyable variety. Largest is the garden of Hovingham Hall where enormous yew hedges frame views of the 1760 house. Renowned for its indoor riding school on one side of the house and cricket ground immediately in front on the other, the Hall has an established country house garden that has benefited from much replanting by the present Lady Worsley. The walled kitchen garden, once planted as a hop garden, now has a simple new design of grass decorated with a collection of malus and a malus avenue makes a fine vista to an urn and pedestal. The other gardens are all smaller and range from one rising in terraces up the hillside to a small courtyard, and a walled garden cleverly situated within old farm buildings. Taken one after the other they present visitors with a delightful — and fairly typical — example of what can be found hidden away in villages all over the country.

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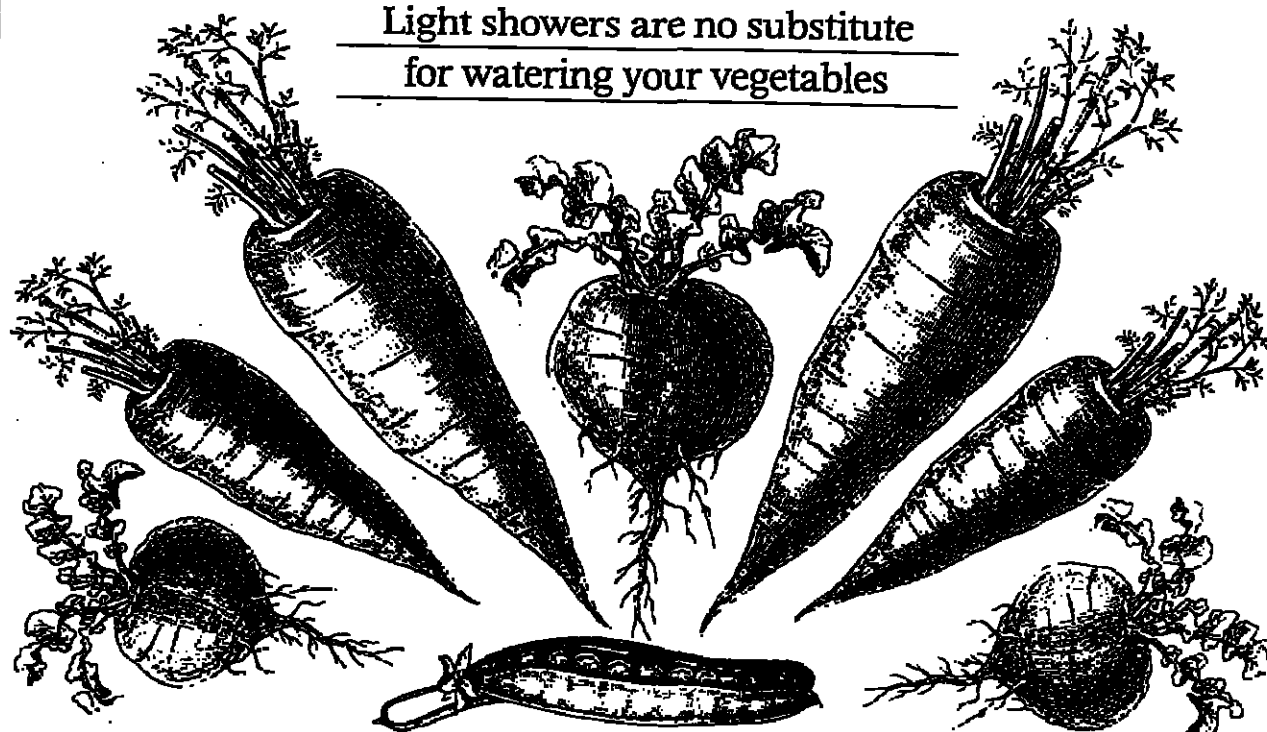
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Rain, but not as we want it

Light showers are no substitute for watering your vegetables



Vegetables need a good soaking at this time of year, otherwise roots will travel to the surface in search of moisture

IT HAS BEEN a case of all hands to the hosepipes and watering cans in the vegetable garden for several weeks. Crops need regular watering but try to do so in the evening, or at any rate never in full sunshine — and always give your plants a good, steady drenching. A light sprinkling will only draw rootlets to the surface and cause excessive transpiration. If there is dry soil within 3in of the surface, you haven't done the job properly.

It is not too late to make a number of sowings for crops later this year, or to replace those that have failed to germinate.

Peas: the main crop, *Detrol*, is renowned for its flavour, and will keep

until March in a pea-filled box in the garden shed. Sow in 1in-deep drills about 12in apart.

Carrots: make a second sowing, in part of the plot that is deep and fertile, but not recently manured, to avoid forking of the roots. *James Scarlet Intermediate* is an old favourite which performs well. Store as for beetroot.

Peas: *Kelvedon Wonder* and *Pioneer*

are mildew-resistant and will give a crop in September if you get them in right away. Choose an open spot which has had not grown peas for at least two seasons. Water copiously and apply a mulch of weedkiller-free grass cuttings between the rows. Pick regularly — if pods are left mature, the crop will be much reduced.

Lettuce: continue successional sowings of *Webbs Wonderful* and *Little Gem*.

Pests and diseases are now revealing themselves, so dust onions, carrots and brassicas with *Gammex-BHC*. Spray potatoes with *Dithane* at fortnightly intervals to prevent blight.

DAVID BLUNDELL

GARDENING

5 5

Raving with Mrs Perry

Stephen Anderton pays homage to the oriental poppy's showy display in RHS trials at Wisley

At the end of last month the oriental poppy trials were at their peak at the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley. I got there at the tail end of a sunny afternoon, half expecting it to be closed. But no, and I was informed on the gate that at that time it would be "Beautiful and quiet. Just right, sir."

No one can be uncheered by oriental poppies, great honest vulgar things that they are. And at Wisley they were looking fabulous. A whole area of the trial ground had been given over to them, and almost all were in bloom. You could see them glowing from the top of Battleston Hill. There is nothing quite like seeing a few dozen varieties of one plant grown together to make you appreciate the differences between them. Since the common oriental poppy is orange-red, it was the pale pinks and salmons that first took my eye. 'Mrs Perry' was looking good, a 30in salmon variety with the oriental poppy's dark maroon blotch on the inside of each petal and a boss of matching stamens. 'Elam Pink' was a paler, easier-to-use pink, but lacks that telling blotch. If I were a breeder and managed to lose the blotch, I should scrap the plant, not name it.

I was expecting to see the well-known scarlet variety, 'Beauty of Livermere' or 'Goliath' as it used to be called. But a look around the perimeter of the beds showed that this had finished while most of the other varieties were still in bloom. Also over was 'Patty's Plum', that gorgeous dusky plum purple.

Half my reason for going to the trial was to see how the plants stood up to the weather. You read — and I have witnessed — that 'Beauty of Livermere' stands upright on its own, virtually the only self-supporting variety in a whole race of floppers. And as it is a tall variety of 3ft or more that is some achievement. But at Wisley even 'Beauty of Livermere' was given careful support at a foot off the ground. How interesting it would be to grow them all again next year without support, forgetting the flowers but testing which would stand up.

So I missed my Beauty. But 'Redzelle' was almost more blood red and only 30in tall. Nearby was a vigorous orange-red variety called 'Bonfire' in full bloom, and on it, almost better than any other variety, were presented the fan of rising maroon streaks on the back of the petals, like fancy-dress false eyelashes. 'Sindbad' is a huge flowered orange, which displays a well-developed ruff of green bracts under the flower, another attractive feature of oriental poppies, present in some varieties and not in others.

'Graue Witwe' (or Grey Widow) is a 33in almost white variety, with a small maroon blotch, and dark stamens, bracts, and good eyelashes. It has everything. Even the glistening wiry hairs on the stems, succulent as the unshaven legs of a 1930s *hausfrau*. 'Cedric's Pink' was a stumpy, English version of the same, and much less merry.

Flower shapes vary. There are those whose petals have the texture of crumpled silk, like 'Lighthouse', 'Turkish Delight' and 'Prinz Eugen', all in salmon. There are the neater, shallow, bowl-shaped flowers of pale pink 'Polka', and 'Karine', in whose dish the grey-green seedpod with its maroon cap make a delicious contrast.

Then there are the fringed varieties whose petals look as if they have been fringed with a pair of scissors. Salmon 'Forrester Summer' and orange pink 'Springtime' show it well, but orange 'Curlicocks' was the frilliest in the trial.



'Mrs Perry' looking good

FLOWER BOX

ORIENTAL poppies can be planted pot-grown at any time of year, and thrive in almost any soil, in sun. Rich feeding is not necessary. Flowering time is usually late May to early June and lasts two to three weeks. After flowering, the hairy leaves and flower stems may be cut off. Flower colours are intense and exciting, and are best chosen in the flesh rather than from a catalogue. They can be both dazzling and disastrous. The Wisley trial will still be on next year.

RHS Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU24 0QB (01484 224234). The garden is open to the public Monday to Saturday from 10am to 7pm. On Sunday the garden is open to RHS members only from 9am. Admission: RHS members plus a guest, free; adults, £4.90; children under six, free; children six to 16, £1.75; companion for a wheelchair-bound or blind visitor, free; guide dogs only. Parking is free.

If you like your colours mixed, 'Picotee' offers white with an orange frill at the edge of the petals, but alas no blotch. 'Fatima' is a white, fading down to salmon pink at the base of the petals and is irresistibly vulgar. No blotch again. 'Perry's White' is a clean, bowl-shaped white and does have the blotching. In the trials it showed numerous thin stems, compared to the fewer fat trunks of 'Fatima'.

There was even a double oriental poppy, the orange red 'Peter Pan'. But I



'Bonfire' presents a fan of maroon streaks on the back of petals, like false eyelashes

would not grow it. As the flower fades, it collapses upon itself, instead of relaxing outwards like the single varieties. The clarity of the centre of oriental poppies, of pod and blotch and petal, is their fascination, and to lose that for a few extra petals is hardly worthwhile.

Wordsworth in daffodil mood would have loved the poppy trials. I found myself singing away to myself as I looked at delphinium and pinks trials near by. And then it occurred to me that you could sing away at the top of your voice here in

the trial ground and no one would hear you over the roar of the A3.

It is an insidious barrage of sound to which, if Woking District Council have their way, will be added the fall-out of an industrial incinerator. As you leave the trial ground and pass over Battleston Hill into the garden proper, the roar suddenly drops away as if you had walked out of a disco into the cool night air. On the other side of the hill, the poppies were still raving away in the din, but what a memorable, colourful night out it was.

Perfect quarry for television

Viewers will be able to see Belsay's canyons for the first time

UNTIL LAST autumn I had gardened at English Heritage's Belsay Hall, in Northumberland, for almost 11 years. And in all that time we never managed to get the television cameras there. Now, at long last, Channel 4's Friday-night series *Garden Party* is going to film a programme at Belsay, and I shall be going back to take part.

I had always imagined a camera going through the awesome canyons of Belsay's six-acre "designer" quarry garden at high speed, like the eye of the Minotaur running to devour an intruder. Background music would not include any of the clarinet obligatos which has haunted gardening programmes since *The Victorian Kitchen Garden*. Belsay deserves something groaning and subterranean, by Stravinsky or Bartok. Rhododendrons and bamboos lashing at the lens as it rushes through. Panic as the camera dodges into a cavernous side-chapel and bolts out again.

NOT QUITE *Garden Party*, perhaps, but we shall see what they make of it. It is time that garden photography turned creative. And Belsay is virgin territory for television. So is most of Northumberland — that is its history, an area east of southern Scotland that people rush through on the way to Edinburgh.

Garden Party's format is to invite members of the public to a major garden, and to answer their gardening queries through a team of experts placed around the site. The garden, with all its pleasures and problems, are filmed alongside. In this case, how to garden on shady sandstone rubble for jungle effect with only 24in of rain a year. The northeast, remember, is remarkably dry. The summers fortunately are cool and the autumns long, giving huge potential for colour in September and October.

Some members of the public are asked to take away a video camera and to film their attempts at fulfilling the experts' advice. Perhaps we shall have sweet old ladies blasting out quarry gardens in Cramlington New Town and Chester le Street, who knows? The mining tradition has always been strong in the northeast.

STEPHEN ANDERTON

● *Garden Party* from Belsay Hall is on Friday, July 19 at 8pm on Channel 4.

WEEKEND TIPS

- After flowering, prune old-fashioned and shrub roses.
- Watch for rust on roses, mahonias and hypericums, and spray if necessary.
- Keep thirsty perennials such as phlox and delphiniums well watered.
- Clumps of bearded irises of four years old or more can be divided. Replant only the fattest rhizomes, just on the surface, facing south and 9in apart.
- Cut out flowered stems of Euphorbia robins at ground level when the flowers have faded completely.
- Summer prune apples and pears, to allow the sun to ripen the fruit more fully.
- Stop cucumbers at the desired height and stop fruiting side growths after the second leaf. Take off male flowers and those on the main stem.
- Give ample water to courgettes, tomatoes, celery, sweetcorn and cauliflowers.

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KENT: Idenborough, East Brabourne, Near Ashford. Secluded Grade II listed 16th-century cottage in need of updating, in an acre of land at the foot of the North Downs. Four bedrooms, bathroom, three reception rooms and kitchen. About £190,000 (Calcult Maclean, 01233 812050)



DEVON: Berry Cottage, Dittisham. Grade II listed fisherman's cottage with rear garden, situated on the quay of a popular waterfront village four miles upstream of Dartmouth. Three bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining room and galley kitchen. About £200,000 (Fulford 01803 632223)

CHERYL TAYLOR

Cheryl Taylor on the professionals who rest their heads in central London's clouds

Loft fever is still raging in central London, where young professionals and "empty nesters" seem prepared to fork out serious money for little more than a shell.

Until recently, new owners — mostly lawyers, accountants and media folk — were expected to fit out the lofts themselves. Now, buyers can choose between a shell, a finished flat or one that is custom-made.

A loft no longer has to be at the top of a building, but it must have raw, warehouse-style space and plenty of light. For most purchasers, the main attractions are high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows and the chance to design a home from scratch.

The symptoms of loft fever first began to show in 1992, when Manhattan Loft Corporation bought an old print works in Clerkenwell, a rundown area on the fringe of the City of London, and turned it into 23 New York-style lofts, which all sold off-plan within months — and at the lowest point in the housing recession.

Now, a crop of similar conversions are coming onto the market in Clerkenwell, and the urban village is fast becoming one of the hottest spots in town. A string of smart restaurants and shops has already opened.

Alfred Buller, of Bee Bee Developments, is redeveloping eight acres of Clerkenwell, which he bought for £7.5 million two years ago from the governors of Sutton Hospital in Charterhouse. He plans to turn it into a thriving residential and commercial community.

"Demand is coming from single professional people, such as solicitors, accountants and designers, who are looking for something different and like an urban environment. Others are self-employed and want a studio where they can live and work, and couples whose children have grown up and who already have a home in the country, but need a pied-à-terre in central London from which they can walk to work," Mr Buller says.

The concept of mixed commercial and residential use appeals to Islington Council, which supports the



Karl and Anita Sydow in their 2,900sq ft Clerkenwell loft — almost ready for them to move in

IN LONDON, Karl Sydow, his wife Anita and ten-year-old daughter Katrina will soon be moving into their 2,900sq ft loft apartment, with its own lift. It covers the top floor of a converted 19th-century warehouse in Northburgh Street, Clerkenwell. They bought the loft as a shell on a 125-year lease for £425,000, which included £75,000 for the developer, Sky Properties, to fit it out to their specifications.

Mr Sydow, who runs the theatre ticketing agency First Call, says: "We had been looking for more space for

LOFTY AMBITION

two years. We are not gardeners and don't like stairs, so a loft allowed us all the room we wanted on one floor."

Having agreed to buy the loft on a handsake last November, the couple signed a contract in January, paying a deposit of 10 per cent — but only after agreeing on everything that was to go in it, from plugs to light fittings. They worked closely with the architect suggested by the

developer, until they were happy with the final plans.

The couple love their custom-made home, with its vaulted ceilings and maple floors, 50ft living room, private lift and terrace with a view of St Paul's. But to get what they wanted they had to be diligent.

"It is enough of a trauma buying a place that is ready-made. Liaising with architects, solicitors and builders was a mammoth task. It is important to keep an eye on the work as it goes on, to get what you want," Mr Sydow says.

as a commercial building, but has never been occupied. It has now been converted into 12 two-bedroom loft-style flats on the first floor and above, with a marble entrance hall and a gym in the basement.

Although some of the flats at Northburgh Street were sold as shells, the remaining five units have been fitted out. Buyers have a choice of finishes, but the style is open-plan, with simple, modern kitchens and bathrooms. Prices range from £165,000 to £225,000. All the flats are on 125-year leases. The agents are Hamptons and Jarvis Keller.

John Rose of Sky Properties, the developer of 8 Northburgh Street, says demand is moving away from shells in favour of finished flats. His next project, Dallington Lofts, will be the conversion of a 19th-century warehouse in Dallington Street, EC1, into 22 flats ranging from 790sq ft to over 3,000sq ft. Prices are from £115,000 to £500,000, including luxury fitted kitchens and bathrooms. There will be a pool, gym and parking.

On the South Bank, Manhattan has sold 53 of its 93 lofts at Bankside Lofts, a clutch of former factories and a new 12-storey tower near Blackfriars Bridge.

In the new Millennium Tower, loft spaces with floor-to-ceiling glass, many with terraces and views over the river to the City and St Paul's, cost from £135,000 for a 570sq ft to £650,000 for 1,273sq ft. All are on 999-year leases. A fit-out service is offered by the developer, costing from £30,000 to £65,000. There is underground parking, a gym and a half-acre landscaped garden.

For its latest venture, Manhattan Lofts has teamed up with house-builders Berkeley Homes to convert New River Head, next to Sadler's Wells Theatre on Rosebery Avenue, EC1, into 129 flats, including 14 sumptuous penthouses.

The Grade II listed 1920s French chateau-style building was the headquarters of the Thames Water Authority. It also has a gym, a covered carpark, a listed rose garden and half an acre of landscaped gardens. The 1930s-style apartments, with original woodblock flooring, chrome-plated ironmongery and fully-fitted kitchens, cost from £500,000.

Manhattan has also recently turned the Marquee Club, Soho, into 28 loft apartments, all of which have sold from plan, and four penthouses. The split-level penthouse shells, framed in steel with floor to ceiling glass under a barrel-vaulted zinc roof, have large terraces on both the sixth and seventh floors. They cost from £875,000 for 1,250sq ft to £2.25 million for 2,500sq ft for a 125-year lease. A garage adds £35,000 to the price. The agent is Knight Frank.

At the top of the market, Knight Frank is asking £2.5 million for a 49-year lease on a 4,500sq ft minimalist shell with 17ft ceilings and a 400sq ft west-facing window on the second and third floors of 8 Kensington Palace Gardens, bordering Kensington Palace. It comes with underground parking and a chauffeur's flat on the lower-ground floor.

The concept of lofts has also caught on further north in England, with a scattering of loft-style warehouse conversions in inner-city areas of both Liverpool and Manchester.

Harry Handelsman, founder of the Manhattan Loft Corporation, says that he might consider loft conversions in the north of England in future. But for the time being, Manhattan is concentrating its efforts in London.

● **Manhattan Loft Corporation:** 0171-401 9922/0171-388 1310; **Kerr-Gilchrist:** 0171-431 0003; **Hamptons:** 0171-226 4688; **Jarvis Keller:** 0171-251 9236; **Sky Properties:** 0171-475 5100; **Knight Frank:** 0171-438 4311/0171-629 8171.

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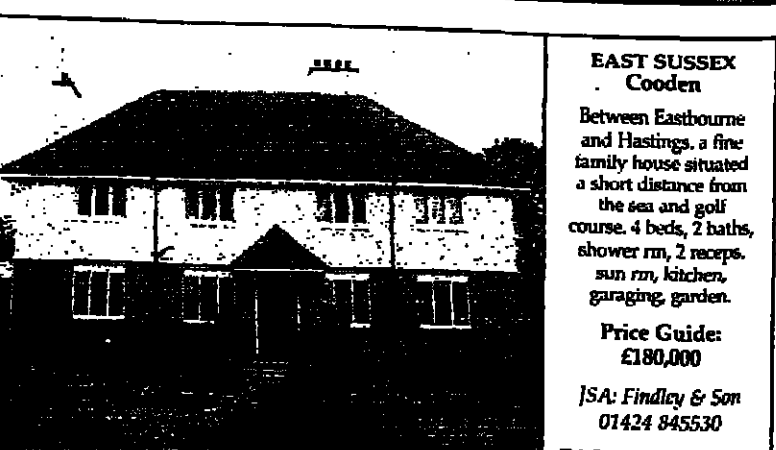
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NEWBURY: 01635 523225

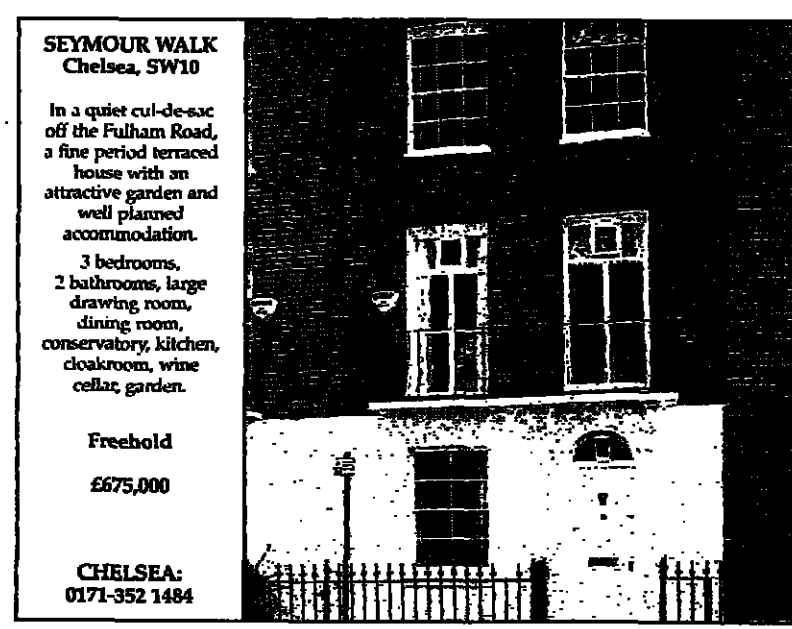
WEST SUSSEX
Shoreham-by-Sea
Between Brighton and Worthing, an attractive 17th century thatched cottage, semi-detached and Grade II listed. 2 beds, bath, reception, kitchen, garden & parking area.
Price Guide: £95,000
[SA:] Ellman-Brown 01273 452288
EAST GRINSTEAD: 01342 326326



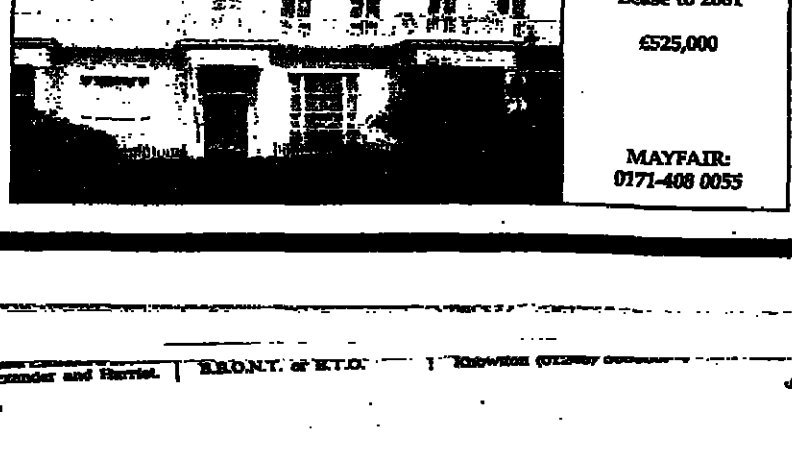
EAST SUSSEX
Cooden
Between Eastbourne and Hastings, a fine family house situated a short distance from the sea and golf course. 4 beds, 2 baths, shower rm, 2 reception, sun rm, kitchen, garaging, garden.
Price Guide: £180,000
[SA:] Findley & Son 01424 845530
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Kensington, W8
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Freehold
£550,000
KENSINGTON: 0171-727 0705



SEYMOUR WALK
Chelsea, SW10
In a quiet cul-de-sac off the Fulham Road, a fine period terraced house with an attractive garden and well planned accommodation.
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Facing south over the square gardens, a bright third and fourth floor (with lift) maisonette with self accommodation.
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SHOPPING

9

Luggage has undergone a revolution since the invention of the wheel — now it's become a designer accessory

A case of vanity for followers of fashion



The Pier canvas and pignskin case (£34.95), left. Brora tweed case (£195)

There have been two revolutions in the world of luggage in the past five years. The first is the introduction of wheels or "trolley systems", the second is the revival of the vanity case. But perhaps more exciting than any marketer's talk of new fixtures and fittings is the return of British designers. What was once a dreary but necessary travel purchase has been transformed into a stylish accessory by designers from these shores.

David Lunan, the joint owner of Fiorelli in the UK, undertook a tour of the Continent, visiting Spain, Italy and Scandinavia before launching the brand with his designer brother, Stuart, in 1995.

Despite Fiorelli's Italian-sounding name, the brand was originally promoted in Australia and its introduction to British department stores has contributed to its £20 million sales worldwide.

The designs have attracted a younger luggage-buying public with Fiorelli's target market of 18 to 25-year-olds no longer raiding their parents' wardrobes before going on holiday. This trend is borne out by Oasis, another British success story which was in receivership in 1991 before the original directors bought out the company and turned it round to make profits of £11 million last year. The customers in Oasis

fashion stores are 18 to 35-year-olds, although the introduction of its black luggage range is described as a "quirk of fate".

As the deputy chairman of Oasis, Maurice Bennett, explains: "Somebody was trying to register the name 'Oasis' for luggage and we discovered it was Antler. Rather than be confrontational we asked to see the luggage and, although it wasn't right for us, decided to develop a range with them." Sales are now in their third year with plans for trolley cases in September.

So much for style, but what of quality? No amount of posing at check-in desks can make up for the disappointment of seeing one's bags appear ripped on the conveyor belts at the other end — particularly as the British prefer buying "soft" luggage over the traditional "hard" luggage in moulded plastic, which only accounts for 10 per cent of UK sales. "The world is making a better suitcase," Brian Wreford, of Antler, says. "The use of better fabrics and woven polyester straps now means that they are built to last."

So why then are manufacturers reluctant to include longer guarantees with their luggage? Harrods offers a guarantee of one year. Antler's Knightsbridge range is guaranteed for three years. But for many of us, that only covers a few



From left: Antler wardrobe bag (£115), tote bag (£70), and roller case (£99); Fiorelli overnight bag (£34.99) and handbag (£19.99); Oasis vanity case (£29.99) and luggage holder (£29.99)

BAGGAGE HANDLERS

■ Antler, available in House of Fraser and most major department stores. Ring 0161-764 0721 for nearest stockist.

■ Brora, 344 King's Road, London SW3. Ring 0171-352 3697 for mail order.

■ Fiorelli, available in House of Fraser and most department stores. Ring 0181-563 2206 for nearest stockists.

■ Eximious, 10 West Halkin Street, London SW1. Ring 0171-235 7828 for mail order.

■ Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-730 1234). Sale ends July 20.

■ Oasis, available in 100 stores nationwide. Ring 0171-377 5335 for nearest stockists.

■ The Pier, available in its 15 UK stores. Ring 01235 821088 for nearest stockists.



A miniature leather Train Case by Eximious at £33.50

holidays. Gary Stratta, buyer for Harrods, puts this down to the rough treatment of baggage handlers, whom he thanked under his breath for "keeping us in business". Whatever the truth, it was refreshing to speak to Victoria

Stapleton, the owner of Brora, whose hand-finished tweed cases she confidently expects to last a lifetime. "They are the sort of bags you would find in your grandfather's cupboard in a 100 years' time and think 'I want that'." The cases

are made in Scotland from "hairy" Harris tweed, which is heat-bonded to olive-green canvas and rubber-backed for waterproofing. The finishing in saddle leather with solid brass buckles explains the price of £195, although she admits

that "they should really sell at £245, but I don't believe people would buy them then".

But what of trolley bags and vanity cases? Harrods confirms that its top-selling item is a trolley case — the Samsonite Spark Jet

Star — of which it sells ten to 25 a week. According to luggage myth, the trolley trend started in America where a former pilot started a company to introduce bags on wheels like those favoured by flight attendants. The bags quickly took off over here, with Antler launching its free-wheeler range featuring four wheels and telescopic handles.

As for vanity cases, it remains to be seen whether followers of fashion will be swayed by this month's issue of *Vogue* which states: "Women should not carry vanity cases... they are positively disabling — the modern equivalent of foot binding, only worse because it is voluntary." Oasis claims that they are its biggest seller, with about 250 leaving the stores every week. Antler puts the renaissance down to the retro 1960s revival and has reintroduced vanity cases.

Fashion may come and go but colour remains constant. Green is still everyone's favourite, although 20 years ago it was considered unlucky because the arsenic used to colour the fabric often leaked.

EMMA MAHONY

Additional research by Caroline Griffiths
Thanks to Eurostar for the use of its facilities

Just nipping over to Dieppe, dear

Tired of the local shops?
Spice up your larder with a trip to France

For an alternative shopping experience, why not try a day trip to Dieppe? Once a chic seaside resort attracting the likes of Renoir and Oscar Wilde, Dieppe is a haven for cross-channel shoppers.

Stena Sealink (0990 707070) operates a ferry and new Pegasus catamaran service from Newhaven to Dieppe, and day-return tickets for foot passengers have been reduced to £4 on the ferry and £5 on the Pegasus service during July and August. With normally five outward sailings a day, and the Pegasus service, which has two, Dieppe offers the chance to savour the atmosphere of the old town, and to wander around the markets.

The stalls stretch the length of the main street, Grande Rue, and around the Rue St-Jacques to the Place Nationale. Stalls of flowers, vegetables, meat and cheeses line the Grande Rue, and the smell of roasting chicken mingles with the clucks of the living.

Specialities such as goats' cheeses are popular and are on sale in the market from £1.12 to £2.75. Fresh garlic sells for £3.75 per kilo. The *Sauissons de Normandie* (Grande Rue) has peppered salamis for £3.63. A sign reassures shoppers that the meat products are pure pork — no British beef here. L'Epicerie Olivier (18 Rue St-



Charcutier Traiteur with its tempting array of seafood is just one of the many speciality food shops in Dieppe

Jacques, 35 84 22 55) stocks more than 300 cheeses. This small gourmet store sells mustards, wines, brandies and other local delicacies. Camembert (250g) costs £4; Maille Moutarde Fine de Dijon (280g) £1.60; Rillettes Normandes Maison Châtel pork paté (170g) £2.60.

A La Marée Du Jour Poissonnerie (35 84 18 15) offers a wide choice of fresh fish. Sardines are £3.50 a kg, moulles espagnole £3.75 a kg, and live crabs £4.94 a kg. Mouth-watering seafood is also on sale at the Charcutier Traiteur (35 84 12 03) delicatessen, on Grande Rue. Its array of fish includes *truite en gelée* (£3.25 each), *coquille crabe*

(£2.60) and a half *queue langoustine* (£10.25 each). Delicious breads and cakes abound in Dieppe. Boulangerie Pâtisserie Dieppoise (Rue St-Jacques, 35 84 22 54) sells *flan au coco*, filled with a mixture of coconut and egg custard, for just under £1, and buttery croissants from 45p.

An Bon Pain De Campagne on the same street has 400g French sticks for 60p and a variety of loaves. For an excellent variety of cheap wines, try Prisme's (13 Grande Rue, 35 82 64 26), a basement supermarket with prices from about £1 per bottle. Best buys include Vin de Pays des Maures les Rocailles de Font Vallon, Fermé Des

Roches 1995, and Le Moulin Du Chateau Rouquette Sur Mer 1994. Le Sommelier (Rue des Maillots, 35 06 05 20) offers a large selection of wines from just under £2 a bottle. Wine tastings are also available.

For straw and wicker bags try a stall on Place St-Jacques. Large bags from £3.62 with straw handles, to £4.38 with leather handles. The Qual Henri IV is lined with restaurants, cafés and bars offering every delicacy you can imagine. Try L'Orange Bleu (101 Quai Henri IV, 35 84 49 02) which has *l'assiette de langoustines mayonnaise* (crayfish and mayonnaise) for £6.25, *moules*

frites for £4.37, and house wines at £1.87 a glass. Café Chez Louise, on Rue Guémier just off the road to the ferry terminal, a deli, grocery store, bar, café and fishing-tackle shop. Coffee at about 65p a cup. Stena has duty-free offers for July such as Tia Maria (one litre) at £13.99, Courvoisier VS (one litre) at £17.50.

AMANDA LOOSE

Prices are based on 8p to £1. Stena provides a free bus from the ferry terminal to the town centre. Dieppe Tourist Office 00 33 35 84 11 77. Parking at Newhaven terminal £2.50 for the day.

Travel, pages 17-23

AN EXCLUSIVE TIMES TRAVEL OFFER

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VICTORIA TRAVEL, the gardening cruise specialist, has arranged a special package for *Times* readers, departing from Dover on the *Black Prince* on Wednesday, November 20, 1996. The *Times* party on the 13-night cruise to Madeira and the Canaries will be led by Stephen Anderson, the gardening correspondent of *The Times*.

For bookings made by September 1, prices start at £649 per person for a three-berth cabin, £899 per person for a two-berth cabin and £899 per person for a four-berth family cabin. Port charges, insurance, drinks and gratuities are extra. There are excellent restaurant, leisure and entertainment facilities on board the *Black Prince* which can carry 440 passengers. Second-class return rail travel to Dover is free from any UK station. Readers in Ireland can enjoy free flights from Belfast and Dublin. For car drivers, there is free parking at Dover. Victoria Travel can arrange subsidised overnight hotel rates. Each passenger receives a free travel bag.

You don't have to be a keen gardener to enjoy this sun-kissed voyage which includes visits to Lisbon, Gibraltar and Tenerife. One of the highspots of the cruise will be the time spent on the wonderful island of Madeira. For the first 80 passengers to book with *The Times*, this will include a visit to the famous Reids Hotel for afternoon tea and a tour of the garden.

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SHOPPING

11 5

Nineties tennis is a whole new ball game

String up your opponents with the latest developments in tennis technology

Is it a coincidence that the Americans and the Germans, who are supposed to be obsessed with technology, excel at tennis? Britain, where there are fewer than a million players, is probably the only country where recreational players still turn up for a game of tennis decked out in grubby whites, old plimsoles and a wooden racket with sagging strings. Your opponent may be amused, but you will not win so poorly equipped.

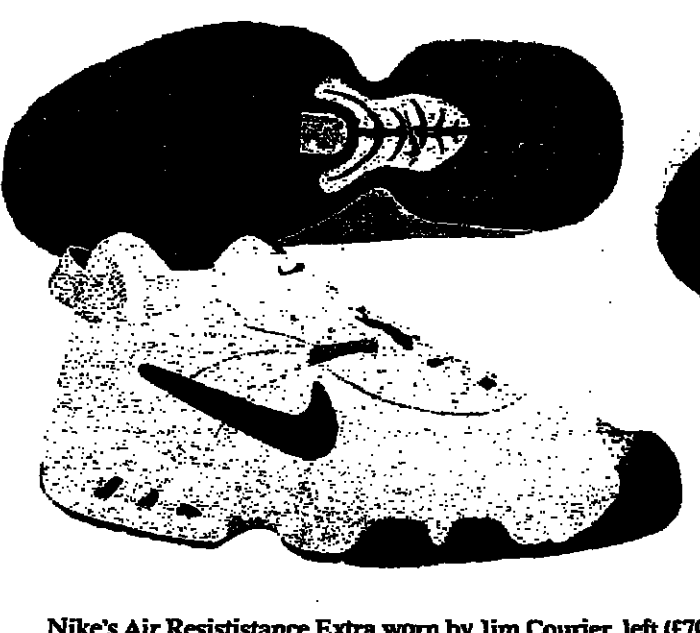
Tennis, according to the Canadian Peter Burwash, who heads the world's largest teaching programme, is a game for life. These days, new rackets and strings should allow 70-year-olds to play better than Fred Perry, Britain's most recent Wimbledon champion, in 1936.

There are no rules in tennis regulating racket size, shape or materials, and designs have become more sophisticated, but the danger of buying a £200 racket which can ruin your game has also escalated. Power hitters are likely to spray balls erratically with big-beamed rackets, for example.

Metal rackets began to appear in the late 1960s. Today's rackets are made of graphite, Kevlar, fibre-glass and something called ceramic FP fibre. Frames began expanding in 1976, with the obvious advantage of a bigger hitting area. In 1987, the outside edges, or beams, of the frame itself were widened, from around 20mm to 28mm on widebody rackets, with a dramatic increase in power.

This year's revolution is the stretch, or extra-long racket, with an extended handle. Some 30 models are already on the market. The advantages are more power on service and ground strokes and more pronounced spin.

Each racket design has its faults. The oversize is less manoeuvrable at the net. The widebody sacrifices control to power. The extra-long magnifies errors in timing. Which, then, is the ideal racket for you?



Nike's Air Resistance Extra worn by Jim Courier, left (£70) and the Air Zoom Challenge, right, worn by Andre Agassi (£80)

RACKETS

A GOOD choice for serious club players, and especially hard-hitting women, is the oversize (105sq in) widebody (28mm) Yonex Super RQ-500 at £200. Yonex is the choice of Monica Seles, Martina Navratilova and Martina Hingis, not to mention Sergi Bruguera. Yonex's square-shaped isometric head gives a more generous sweet spot than oval rackets, and its patented OPS shaft works like a sling shot to allow the throat to flex, keeping the ball longer on the strings and thus imparting far more spin. But at 11 1/2 lb, this is not a lightweight racket.

Shorter, less aggressive players should go for Prince's Michael Chang Precision 730pl Longbody at £200. As a moderate oversize (107sq in), medium weight (10 3/4 lb) racket and with a traditional flat beam of 20mm, the Chang model is an ideal compromise of extended power without loss of touch and control.

Less well-endowed players — men, women and beginners of all ages — can be transformed from wimps to winners with arguably the most powerful racket in tennis: Wilson's new Sledge Hammer 2.8si Stretch. At £280, it is ultra-light (8 1/4 lb) and features the largest and highest sweet spot in tennis, thanks to its massive head (116sq in) and wide beam (29mm).



The Tennis Twist, £199

More Wilsons are sold than any other racket in Britain. And the range of hammers and sledgehammers is Wilson's most successful. At my local club there is a woman aged over 70 who competes, and wins, with the Wilson.



SHOES

UNLIKE everything else in tennis, shoes are getting heavier, with few men's shoes weighing less than 14oz because they have more reinforcement and cushioning.

They are also becoming more specialised, with tread patterns designed to slide on clay, grip on grass and last longer on hard courts. Durability, however, is less of an issue than proper lateral support, a quality demanded by the hunches and direction changes of tennis and missing altogether, for example, in most running shoes. Manufacturers also make shoes suited to players whose feet are pronated (pigeon-toed) or supinated (turned outwards).

Andre Agassi would probably disagree, but the coolest tennis shoe for my money is Nike's Air Resistance II Extra at £70. This is Jim Courier's shoe, and features Kevlar reinforcement for die-hard durability as well as a fabric heel-strap to pull up the heel cup. This is a classic low-cut shoe in tasteful white leather with green trim.

The latest Agassi shoe is Nike's Air Zoom Challenge at £80. The styling is strictly from basketball, but the new Zoom Air cushioning technology is cloud-comfortable, and this year the foot is even closer to the ground.

Wilson's Hard Drive at £70 comes in both men's and women's

versions. It uses Goodyear Indy 500 rubber on the sole and abrasion guard areas and is specifically designed for hard courts. This shoe is so tough that Wilson guarantees the sole against wear for six months, at least in the USA. Such guarantees, for as long as ten months, are routine in America but have not yet been instituted by European shoe distributors.

ACCESSORIES

RECREATIONAL players can go a lifetime without breaking a string. More serious players are lucky if they last a week. Tighter strings give more control, looser strings more power. All strings lose about 20 per cent of their tension within weeks, so the rule of thumb is to change strings as many times a season as you play per week.

Gamma strings are ranked the world's best by the US Stringers Association, and cost between £20 and £22, including labour, in most shops. Gamma TNT 18 is one of the best playing strings on the market, along with Gut 3. Gamma's Infinity strings are made to last forever, while Gamma Ruff is textured to impart maximum top spin.

Two new string tools are Gamma's MiniSTT electronic string-tension metre at £40 and the Shock Off vibration dampener at £6.

Balls are often bought as an afterthought. Research indicates



Right: Wilson 2.8si Sledgehammer, £280

that 80 per cent of serious players are willing to pay more for court-specific balls. Dunlop's new range includes the Max TP Clay Court and Max TP Hard Court as well as the Duramax All Court for extra long life on any surface. All balls priced from £8 for four.

Finally, the Tennis Twist at £199 will throw as many as 28 balls up to 21ft. It is the perfect partner when nobody else wants to play.

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1. The artery is clogged by deposits 2 & 3. Through what you eat you can gradually clean your arteries.

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Senior Citizens with money in the bank should read this before it's too late

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A right little charmer

■ IT WAS AN ACCIDENT
By Jeremy Cameron
Touchstone, £14.99
ISBN 0 684 81658 X

HONOUR among thieves? Jeremy Cameron would certainly have you believe there is, at least up Walthamstow way. When Nicky Burkett gets back from four years in Wandsworth (manslaughter — nothing too naughty), he finds that all his old mates have clubbed together to get him a flat. Just the thing for a bit of quiet rehabilitation, you might think.

Not a bit of it. Within hours of his release, Burkett (note the first syllable) is in all sorts of bother with all the wrong sorts of people. Sure as egg is agro, he finds himself in hospital and, when his friends start to fill the beds around him, it is time to do some thinking.

Nicky grunts his way through the tale in a backstreet argot that, although convincing, is limiting and makes for a somewhat flat read. Collectors of slang will find no surprises other than to see it used accurately.

The author is a probation officer who lives and works in Walthamstow, which implies



Cameron: entertaining

that he has constructed his hero from professional experience, but Nicky seems to owe less to any East London Rude Boy than he does to the familiar Charming Rogue figure, notably Adam Faith in *Budgie*. And charm he does: everyone he meets busts a gut to help him, no matter what he has done. But then Nicky is standing against the massed forces of evil — the usual ones, that is — and of course they know who he is.

Despite the odd gruesome moment, there is nothing sinister or dark here, but it is a consistently entertaining and funny book — describing Jamaica, for instance, thus: "Half of Kingston was like Canary Wharf, the other half like Hackney after the bomb. None of it was like Walthamstow. Nor even Tottenham."

It Was An Accident should ensure Cameron is enjoyed well beyond E17.

GORDON CHILVERS

Dirty job and the one to do it

Marcel Berlins is intoxicated by an authentic whiff of a public prosecutor's fight against sex crime on New York's seamiest beat

freretic and hopeful, but often tired and disappointed.

The whiff of verisimilitude is a start, but it is not enough on its own to make a good crime thriller. Happily, Fairstein delivers the other ingredients too: engaging characters, an intelligent story full of twists, and terrific tension.

Alex reads in the New York papers that she has been gunned down while

■ FINAL JEOPARDY
By Linda Fairstein
Little, Brown, £14.99
ISBN 0 316 88008 6

driving near her holiday cottage on Martha's Vineyard. The victim turns out to be her famous, sexy and promiscuous actress friend Isabella, staying at Alex's for a few days' incognito peace. But was the prosecu-

tor the real target, or had Isabella's notorious past caught up with her?

Alex becomes a crucial, vulnerable and scared witness in her own investigation. At the same time she is trying to bring to justice an elusive, vicious serial rapist: and she is having problems with her lover, a former senatorial candidate once the target of an unhinged stalker. Fairstein impressively juggles out-

and-out action with psychological manoeuvring; she is, as one would expect, particularly informative and chilling on the psychology of sexual obsession. The threads unite in a superbly frightening climax in New York's Central Park, scene of several genuine brutal sex attacks in recent years — in some of which the writer was professionally concerned.

If I have stressed the close link between Fairstein and her heroine, it is because it contributes to the power of this excellent debut novel. There is an anger and a passion in Alex Cooper that is clearly not fictional.

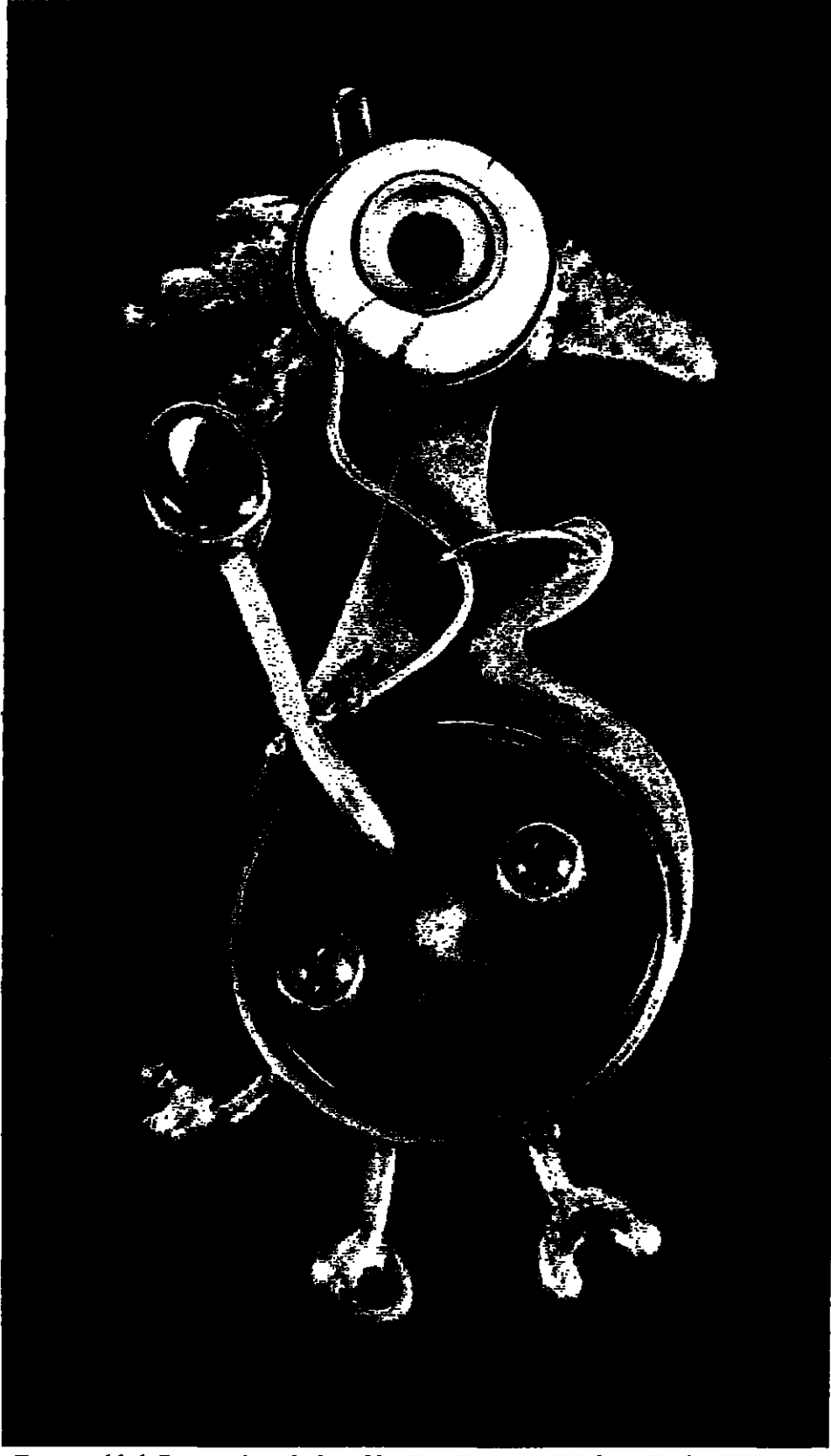
BOOK NEWS

Cornwell rides off West

PATRICIA CORNWELL, the thriller-writer millionairess who was recently named in a Washington divorce case as the lesbian lover of a former FBI agent, has created a new fictional detective. (She probably needed a change after all that.) Virginia West is a police-woman with a lighter, wittier touch than Dr Kay Scarpetta, the medical examiner whom we first met in Cornwell's award-winning *Postmortem* and who went on to make a fortune for her creator. West will be on the case from next March. Meanwhile, there is one more Scarpetta to come — *Cause of Death*, scheduled for publication in October.

● FANCY an evening in a beautiful garden, sipping a glass of wine and hearing writers talk about their work? A new project, *Writers in the Gardens*, begins on Wednesday, July 17, at 7.30pm, when the novelist Francis King and fellow writers will be found discoursing in the gardens of Easton Lodge, near Thaxted, Essex. On July 24, Josephine Pulein-Thompson and others will be speaking in the gardens of Whaddon House, near Kegworth, Leicestershire. Tickets cost £3.50, redeemable against purchase of books. Information: 0171-833 9111.

● VIOLET GWYNNE, the first woman to be recorded playing the harpsichord, is the subject of a new biography by her great-niece, Jessica Douglas-Home (whose late husband Charles was Editor of *The Times*). Gwynne wore astounding clothes, drew Picasso, Diaghilev and Bartók to her salon, and ended up living with four men in a ménage à cinq. Meanwhile her husband's two sisters were murdered by their butler. *Violet* will come from Harvill in November, along with a CD of her playing, compiled by Christopher Hogwood.



Free as a bird: Roc pendant designed by Sam Kramer, 1958, from *Design 1935-1965: What Modern Was*, edited by Martin Eidelberg (Abrams, £19.95, ISBN 0 8109 2480 3)

Chimps off the old block

SYMPATHY and empathy are the two great human qualities, we like to think. In a more scientific framework, the ability to understand the consciousness of others and to make our own independent decisions accordingly is called theory of mind. The heroine of Sanjida O'Connell's debut novel is determined to find out whether chimpanzees possess it but in the process runs into problems with some humans.

This is a taut, complex and highly ambitious book that mixes science with emotion and tries to deal at once with elements of human and animal cruelty. Sandra, an animal behaviourist, lives her social life among the chattering classes — her older, television-type boyfriend, her weird, exotic friend Kim who is determined to program robot insects with the predator instinct — whom she escapes for the seemingly more basic world behind bars at the zoo. But it is not that simple.

There is a message somewhere in here about compassion and the danger of lacking it, but at times it risks becoming confused within parallel story lines that collide rather than converge at the end.

In contrast, Leslie Ford's *Double Exposure* is an almost classically concise, crisply narrated thriller about twin sisters, one of whom disappears in mysterious circumstances on a Caribbean beach. When the missing sister's business partner commits suicide, the plot inevitably thickens. This too is a drama enacted on the fringe of the upwardly mobile middle class. Sandra's boyfriend is an aspiring actor, she

■ THEORY OF MIND
By Sanjida O'Connell
Black Swan, £6.99
ISBN 0 552 99709 9

■ DOUBLE EXPOSURE
By Leslie Ford
Headline, £16.99
ISBN 0 7472 1556 1



O'Connell: ambitious

a top-notch fashion photographer. The story moves in and out of bars, cafes and country houses from Islington to Cornwall via Bristol.

As it does, Sandra begins to re-examine her life with her twin and to wonder how much of their childhood and adult friendship was wishful self-deception.

I guessed the crux of the plot less than half-way through, but it is a tribute to the author's relaxed yet compelling first-person narrative style that I still kept turning the pages. Where *Double Exposure* scores most highly is in its confessional tone and its immense readability — a lesson in the art of storytelling.

PETER MILLAR

TIMES BOOKS

THURSDAY

A Divided Self: Ronald Hayman on the enigma that was R. D. Laing; Matthew Parris on life among an Amazonian tribe; plus John Ryle on Bruce Chatwin

NOVELS IN BRIEF

Gone with a raggle-taggle gypsy-o

■ PERFECTLY CORRECT
By Philippa Gregory
HarperCollins, £12.99
ISBN 0 00 225315 1

PHILIPPA GREGORY'S heroine, Louise Case, is attractive, clever and single, with a fulfilling job as a university lecturer, a nice house and a devoted lover. Her life seems almost irritatingly perfect — until the day she finds that her back garden has been taken over by an octogenarian gypsy with a cheerful disregard for the rules by which Louise runs her life. Under Gypsy Rose's anarchic tuition, Louise finds herself challenging the smug orthodoxies of feminist academia in order to think for herself and discovering that she has been living a lie.

Gregory's deconstruction of post-feminist attitudes sometimes seems a bit lightweight, and there are moments when it strays into farce. But her satirising of political correctness is timely, and she is never less than entertaining.

■ MY RIDE WITH GUS
By Charles Carillo
Scout, £8.99
ISBN 0 340 66661 7

A PLOT which hinges on the disposal of an inconvenient corpse is not a new idea but Charles Carillo manages to make it fresh — as well as extremely funny. Ambitious young architect Jimmy Gambar has everything: a successful career, a loft apartment in Manhattan and the love of a good woman. It is New Year's Eve, and he is about to propose to his girlfriend, Wendy. Then things start to go horribly wrong.

A quarrel over Wendy's choice of New Year's gift — a hideous pink silk tie — leads to Jimmy's storming out into the night. After this, events unravel further, leaving Jimmy with a dead body on his hands and nobody to turn to but his elder brother, Gus — a retired



Carillo: unwanted corpse

Mafia hitman. Carillo sustains his deliberately improbable narrative with élan, piling up the jokes in the best comic-thriller tradition.

■ CRIME AND RAVISHMENT
By Judith Summers
Coronet, £5.99
ISBN 0 340 63818 4

MIRANDA GREEN is a bored housewife and mother of two, whose marriage and journalistic career have run into the sand. Then she is caught up in a supermarket robbery and finds herself drawn into a life of crime with gorgeous, sexy gunman Ed Baines. This, of course, transforms her from frumpy neglected wife to glamorous bank robber.

This is wish-fulfilment for stay-at-homes — on a par with a quick flick through the Ann Summers catalogue, and just as enjoyable.

■ GHOST WRITING
By John Herdman
Polygon, £7.99
ISBN 0 7486 6211 1

WHEN Leonard Balmain, a failed writer, is asked to "ghost" the memoirs of an eccentric stranger, Torquil Tod, it seems like easy money. But as the weeks pass and more details about his subject's past emerge, Balmain begins to perceive that there is more to Tod's confession than meets the eye. Is Balmain, perhaps, being made an accessory to murder — or some even more unspeakable act? John Herdman's intriguing tale plays games with levels of fiction, which can at times seem beguiling, at others rather irritating — as if the author himself were not entirely convinced by his own story.

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Meet the best-read man in the world

"ONLY connect" might be the motto of this ingenious guide to thousands of enjoyable novels. At first glance, its arrangement seems rather complicated, but it can be quite quickly mastered — in about the time it takes to read a sentence by Proust.

Basically, it is a list of novelists arranged alphabetically, with a general comment on each author, a full account of one book (generally his or

■ GOOD READING GUIDE
By Kenneth McLeish
Bloomsbury, £6.99
ISBN 0 7475 2694 X

her best) and a follow-up reading list. This list starts with other novels by the same author, then goes on to suggest novels with similar themes. Here the amiable and well-read Kenneth McLeish begins to have fun.

After *A Passage to India*, for instance, he suggests some "fascinating books showing culture-clash going the other way — people used to 'abroad' being discomfited by contemporary Britain", and he proposes novels by Paul Theroux and P. H. Newby.

There are also 12 entries suggesting more elaborate "pathways" from various great novels. Ingenuity again here. After Kafka's *The Trial*, we get a list of

books in which "humans invent a society which then goes mad", including novels by Margaret Atwood and Thomas Pynchon. Finally, there are general lists of books about everything from "Murder Most Mind-boggling" to "Depression and Psychiatry". McLeish will probably always be the only man who has read them all.

DERWENT MAY

A dog's afterlife

JOSH longs for a dog — but he is nonetheless startled when a phantasmal pooch appears by his bedside on the first night in a new house. Enid Richmond's *The Dream Dog* (Walker, £8.99, ISBN 0 7445 4130 1) is a nice, soppy animal story with a happy ending but is also a good introduction to complex narrative structure for children of eight plus. The dog Gyp's voice opens each chapter, gradually unfolding his story — is he a ghost? A memory? Or is he just a dog?

Ursula Dubosarsky is a stylish writer who appeals to sophisticated ten-year-olds and over. She weaves parallel stories of two children whose feelings are at the mercy of the adults in their lives in *Bruno and the Crumhorn* (Viking, £7.99, ISBN 0 670 86713 6). Sybil longs for her single mother's feckless boyfriend to come back and be a father to her: Bruno just wants to be himself but his busy parents want him to have an activity by which he can be defined. The crumhorn, a medieval wind instrument, is the unlikely cause of Bruno's agony and self-discovery, and also of Sybil's new hopes.

Two beautiful, elemental picture books stand out this summer. In *The Wonder Thing* (Viking, £10.99, ISBN 0

CHILDREN

670 853 28 3), Peter Gould-thorpe's powerful line-cuts celebrate a commodity we no longer take for granted — water — and is for reading with babies and small children. South Africans Dianne Stewart and Jude Daly score a hit with *The Gift of the Sun* (Frances Lincoln, £9.99, ISBN 0 7112 1021 7). Daly's paintings have a haunting faux naïveté — they are more complex and subtly coloured than at first they seem, while Stewart writes an entertaining tale of a lazy farmer's troubles and triumphs — perfect for under-sixes.

Our online, wired-up children are supposed no longer to want to toast crumpets on a sharpened stick over a camp fire. Hugh McManners, author of Dorling Kindersley's *Outdoor Adventure Handbook* (£5.99, ISBN 0 7513 382 5) helps to reverse the trend by revealing such skills as using a penknife safely ("What's a penknife, Mummy?") and how to lay a secret trail for your friends through the woods. ("But Mummy, why don't we just call them on our mobile?")

SARAH JOHNSON

The Times/Dillons Bestsellers

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3	THE RUNAWAY JURY John Grisham (<i>Century</i>)	£12.99	3 7
4	THE SACRAMENT Clive Barker (<i>HarperCollins</i>)	£15.99	0 1
5	THE WOMAN WHO WALKED INTO DOORS Roddy Doyle (<i>Jonathan Cape</i>)		
6	APPASSIONATA Jilly Cooper (<i>Bantam</i>)	£14.99	0 12
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11			10 3
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DILLONS

BOOKS

13

NEW IN PAPERBACK



Williams: an acute and perceptive sense of imagery

■ **FROM WIMBLEDON TO WACO**
By Nigel Williams
Faber, £5.99
ISBN 0 571 17439 6

NIGEL WILLIAMS took his wife and three sons across the United States in a hired Ford Aerostar one summer and turned what he saw into this hilarious, perceptive book. His wife Susan, on their flight back to Heathrow, remarks that the book will be "a few jokes and a bit of scenery" and, in a way, she is right. Williams is more at ease with jokes than scenery although he has a way of being jokey about his surroundings — the forest of New England, for example, that have the appearance of being "backcombed" — that conjures up a sense of landscape more acutely than pages of description. From Las Vegas to New York,

Williams plays the role of the innocent abroad. He is not, of course, but it makes for some funny writing. In the backseat of the car, elder sons Jack and Ned (surely unrepresentative of youth of any continent) plough their way through Homer, Dickens, Emerson and Plato and confront the American experience with dry satire. In fact there are times when it seems like there's a bit too much wit for one family. What a relief to have the bumptious presence of 12-year-old Harry who simply lets rip and enjoys himself in jacuzzis and hamburger joints.

One emerges from this book with almost as keen a sense of what it is like to live in the west London suburbs as it is to drive across the neon-lit deserts of the United States.



■ **SONGDOGS**
By Colum McCann
Phoenix, £9.99
ISBN 1 85799 509 0

COLUM MCCANN'S first novel follows a wandering photographer through his upbringing by the two gentle ladies who found him as a baby in a field, to the Spanish Civil War, to Mexico and back to old age in Ireland. His son uses old photographs and his father's unreliable memory to piece his life together, and to discover what happened to his mother, a Mexican beauty brought back to Ireland, a place where she could never find happiness. McCann excels at depicting squalor and dreariness. He forces you to realise that for most of the century people have had lives of material discomfort and spiritual and emotional poverty.

■ **THE INFORMATION**
By Martin Amis
Fleming, £6.99
ISBN 0 00 654883 0

AN ALL pervasive stench of paranoia and obsession seeps out of the pages of Amis's latest novel. Struggling author, Richard Tull, plots the demise of his successfully published "friend", Gwyn Barry. We follow his progress as he stalks the streets of west London, searching for the eponymous and ubiquitous information. On the surface this is a simple, but hilarious tale of jealousy among the literati. On a deeper level it acts as the perfect vehicle for Amis to blur the borders between fact and fiction and play with the autonomy of the narrative voice.

■ **WINDFALL**
By Helen Stevenson
Sceptre, £5.99
ISBN 0 340 61824 8

AT THE centre of Stevenson's many layered, allusive and mysterious second novel, a woman mourns her dead lover. A singer who has lost her voice, she sees spirits and seems almost to become one herself, while friends and strangers cause other more tangible disturbances around her in the kingdom of the flesh. A fantasia on the theme of loves courtly and physical, this novel labours under its load of ideas rather than the expense of its author's most interesting characters.

■ **THE TEMPORARY**
By Rachel Cusk
Picador, £5.99
ISBN 0 330 33887 0

TAKE TWO perfectly ill-suited people. Francine Snaith is a vain, manipulative secretary who requires male attention like the air she breathes. Enter Ralph Loman, as deep as Francine is shallow, trapped in a dead-end job and his own sense of failure. Rachel Cusk tells the story of their mis-relationship and its shocking consequences with an assassin's accuracy, tempered by an appreciation of the absurd. A deliciously double-edged novel sealed in a narrative of exquisite lyricism.



■ **THE FACTS OF LIFE**
By Patrick Gale
Flamingo, £6.99
ISBN 0 00 654768 0

THE ROUNDEL, an isolated house — and architectural folly — in the fen country plays host to one family's tragedies and delights in this absorbing novel. Gale unflinchingly addresses the pains afflicting each generation: the repressed legacy of the Second World War that haunts Edward Pepper, a German Jew exiled from his fatherland; the ambivalence of sixties liberation for his daughter; the trauma inflicted on his grandchildren's generation by the advent of AIDS. This novel is too doctly characterised, deeply involving and relevant to be dismissed as a saga. A memorable achievement.

■ **THE HOLLOW YEARS**
France in the 30s
By Eugen Weber
Sinclair Stevenson, £9.99
ISBN 1 85619 691 7

EVIDENCE from an impressive range of contemporary sources fills the pages of this portrait of France between the wars. Its thesis is that France, for all its brilliance and inventiveness in some spheres, was stuck in the nineteenth century, entering the twentieth only in the late 1950s, when a second war — which they could not face and were not ready for — was well behind them. Weber looks at the economy, politics, the military, the arts, Catholicism, pacifism, sport and propaganda through the eyes of both the leaders and the led. A valuable study.

On a run-down Maryland estate, a family finds itself in the grip of a history it cannot control, says Helen Dunmore

No escape from the sanctuary

AT THE uneasy fag-end of the Depression, Edward Mason, impoverished by forces beyond his control as well as by his own poor judgement, must retreat from a way of life he cannot afford into the Maryland estate he has inherited from a great-aunt. Edward sees the move as temporary, and the Retreat as a base from which he will quickly recover himself. Edward's wife Edith thinks differently, and so does his son Sebastian. For them, the Retreat offers safety after the barren wanderings of the past few years.

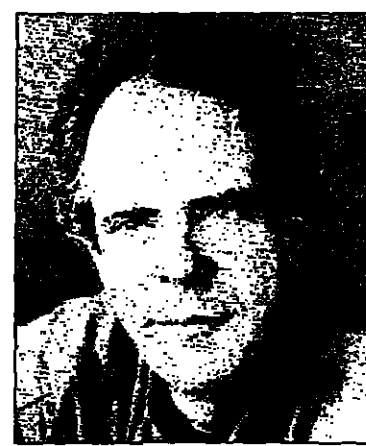
■ **MASON'S RETREAT**
By Christopher Tighman
Chatto & Windus, £9.99
ISBN 0 7011 6563 4

Christopher Tighman's first novel is based on conflict and builds towards tragedy. The estate is brilliantly described in all its dereliction. For generations it has swallowed up lives: the lives of the black workers who sustain it, the white manager, and the Masons themselves. Beneath the decay there is a concealed web of relationships in which Edward and

his family can only flounder. They are inheritors, but they are impotent ones, and Tighman's exploration of this impotence is one of the themes which makes *Mason's Retreat* such an interesting and unusual novel.

History makes an accidental success of Edward Mason, whose failing machine-tool company in Manchester begins to make money as the Depression ends in rearmament and the onset of war. Edward sails for England, relative wealth and freedom of manoeuvre. But for his family, left behind at the Retreat,

disaster is imminent. One son believes that he loves his father, one that he hates him, and both are equally lost without him. Edith Mason thinks she can make sense of her life, blossom in an affair and renew the gardens of the estate, but all the time her story is being carried forward in a pattern she does not understand. It will leave her facing her greatest loss with "a stammering cry, something like an animal". Tighman writes about this family in collapse with a beautifully judged blend of candour and subtlety.



Tighman: beautifully judged candour and subtlety

Fractured in body and soul

Mary Loudon learns how a lamed orphan achieves a kind of peace

SHELTON GERARD LAFLEUR is a young black boy born in Louisiana during the Depression. Abandoned by his parents, he is bought by a wealthy liberal white man, Mr Edward, and is raised by Mr Edward's ailing teenage daughter, Margaret, and her nursemaid, Genevieve. When he is eight, Shelton gets up early one morning in search of adventure. He climbs the largest oak tree he can find in the park and, when he reaches the top, he falls, landing a cripple.

■ **THE WRECKED, BLESSED BODY OF SHELTON LAFLEUR**
By John Gregory Brown
Sceptre, £9.99
ISBN 0 340 67457 1

believes him: they taunt and beat him instead for lying. Shelton wants to speak his name, but cannot for, like everything else he cannot truly call his own, he has never been sure it belongs to him. Only when he is rescued once more, this time by a street artist and his family, does Shelton find a voice, and the strength not only to ask questions but to cope with the answers.

The Wrecked, Blessed Body of Shelton Lafleur is a staggering achievement. John Gregory Brown's complex portrait of a man painted in prose of stark beauty. Young Shelton's history is recounted by his elderly self, the two voices, of man and boy, dovetailing but never uniting to tell one story, their uneasy relationship emphasising the fracture that runs through Shelton's life like a fault through rock. Only by painting, in shocking vivid images of falling men, hanging pigs and burning cathedrals, can Shelton fully investigate what home, self and family mean to him, reaching not so much a conclusion as a compromise.



Brown: deceptively simple

his limbs bent and burning with pain, twisted out of shape forever.

At this point Shelton's story becomes his own, the search for adventure becoming a quest for the truth about his past, for Shelton is not rescued by Mr Edward, or Margaret, or Genevieve. He is taken by the police to hospital, and from there to an orphanage for young negro boys. "I'm not an orphan," he says, "and my mother's white." But nobody

Do not disturb: a hippo rests in the heat of the day, from *Dawn to Dusk: A Safari through Africa's Wild Places* by Jonathan Scott (BBC, £19.99, ISBN 0 563 37195 1)

Where the Dickens?

SHAKESPEARE'S Stratford, Housman's Shropshire, Hardy's Wessex. Those are the Benidorms and Palma Novas of literary tourism; the market has moved on and demands the ever-more remote. We now want to see P. D. James's Suffolk, Irvine Welsh's Leith and even Martin Amis's Maida Vale.

The literary tourist is a burgeoning breed. Here then is that breed's *Baedeker*, a guide book compiled with the thoroughness of a Sherlock Holmes deduction, and not surprisingly endorsed on its title page by the tourist boards of England, Scotland and Wales. Where is Sam Coleridge buried? St Michael's,

■ **A READER'S GUIDE TO WRITERS' BRITAIN**
By Sally Varlow
Prion Books, £16.99
ISBN 1 85375 201 0

Highgate, if you really want to see his headstone. Where did Orwell write *1984*? This book helpfully points out that his cottage on the Isle of Jura is seven miles from the end of the island's only road.

For those who like that sort of thing, it is helpful to have the exact address in Shropshire where Wilfred Owen's parents lived, but it is less satisfying to read that Dick Francis writes successful thrillers about horse racing, and that Newmarket is noted

for horse breeding, but that the two seem to be entirely unconnected in any other way. Still, it will be useful to someone to know that Oscar Wilde dined with Conan Doyle in the Langham Hotel, Portland Place, one night in 1889. On such minutiae is the New Tourism built; tracking authors' spoor threatens to become more popular than reading their works.

Sally Varlow, the compiler of this impressive gazetteer of British literary footprints, has made one sad omission: she does not tell us where she lives herself, so we cannot go and stare at her house.

ALAN HAMILTON

The treachery of love

UNDERLYING this novel's cool, elliptical structure is a heated equation: love equals loss.

Christy's mother dies of cancer on Christy's seventeenth birthday, leaving her furious. "Funny way to let go," she reflects, extracting her birthday cards from among the letters of condolence. Indeed, Jessica's anger at her own ageing and illness had always been malevolently directed at Christy.

The family picks itself up. Christy's father, Frank, sets about building a new house and a fish farm. Maisie, the eldest child, leaves home as quickly as possible. "I'll have to be mother," she says in a telling aside. "I don't want that role." Danny, the youngest, gets on with growing up and Christy, struggling with A levels, gives them up to work with her father.

She meets Mick Fleet, a would-be reporter with an

■ **THE HOOK**
By Rafaela Barker
Bloomsbury, £14.99
ISBN 0 7475 2749 0



Barker: sharp and truthful

unexplained past and falls in love. He has an Irish charm and quicksilver understanding. Only Mick could make Christy laugh by her mother's grave. Punctuated by the normal flare-ups of passion and misunderstandings, their af-

fair is interrupted when Mick is arrested for armed robbery.

Once again Christy is being cruelly taught the dual nature of love, and part of her education is the realisation that she, too, has caught the germ of treachery. Jessica had been jealous of her daughter's beauty and betrayed the trust placed in a mother by a child. A past master at manipulation, Mick allocated Christy a role and she played it. Yet, as he is led away, he does not even look at her. Though it is inevitable, the death throes of Christy's innocence are as shocking as the massacre of the fish by the heron circling the farm.

There is a definite sense that *The Hook* is a rehearsal for a bigger book which will tackle these themes head on. Nevertheless, as a reflection on love and its casualties, its insights are both sharp and truthful.

ELIZABETH BUCHAN

Don't cry for poor little rich girls

THE HERO of Julia Hamilton's *The Good Catholic* is having a mid-life crisis: "Parry glanced at his old friend, Sam had always liked his women thin, whereas he, Parry, had always liked plumpness. How ironic that he should end up with a wife who was thin as a rail." Parry's wife is not just too thin, she is also a Lloyd's Name whose personal fortune is dwindling, so naturally her beleaguered partner must find consolation in the arms of a younger woman with brains and a fabulous figure.

The heroine of Amanda MacAndrew's *Party Pieces*, Charlotte, still has her fortune, and rather good ankles, but that is not enough for her ambitious politician husband: "A politician's wife should be either sensationally intelligent, beautifully stunning or at least usefully and frumpily devoted. Charlotte was none of these."

The banality of the ambitions and aspirations of the heroines and heroes of these novels takes your breath away. In fact, it is about the only thing likely to provoke a sharp intake of breath. These are stories with few surprises. Even if Charlotte's husband does not guess that his children are not his, the reader certainly does, just as the reader knows that the young woman who restores Parry's bruised ego is "dangerous" and the relationship is bound to come to a sticky end.

And if Beattie, the heroine of Wendy Perriam's *Coupling*, is dismayed that her married newspaper editor boyfriend cannot get it up with her any more, we can be sure an alternative, financially secure

■ **THE GOOD CATHOLIC**
By Julia Hamilton
Michael Joseph, £15.99
ISBN 0 7181 4146 6

■ **PARTY PIECES**
By Amanda MacAndrew
Arrow, £5.99
ISBN 0 09 963281 0

■ **COUPLING**
By Wendy Perriam
Flamingo, £15.99
ISBN 0 00 225466 2

and sexually exciting man will materialise by page 400. Beattie's infatuation with an older woman in the meantime provides her, and us, with a diversion, but naturally the smouldering possibility of an erotic relationship is left unfulfilled — after all, then nobody would possibly let Beattie stay at the Savoy any more. It is bad enough trying to get a table for tea at the Ritz when your hair is dishevelled.

The hand fate has dealt all the protagonists includes a liberal dollop of good looks, expensive education and financial ballast so that it is hard to feel sorry for them. Even in adversity they can slip off to France for the weekend, meditate on the beauty of a Veronese painting, or retire to an exclusive health spa. When things go wrong, they have rich and well-connected friends to shelter them in stately homes, equipped with discreet servants and perfectly behaved relations.

If I am going to expend emotional energy on this kind of dysfunctional family, I think I shall save it for the latest twist in the saga of the divorce settlement of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

LISA JARDINE



Dawson: love can be violent

lust, and love can be startling physical and violent.

The novel tells of an unmarried East End couple in their twenties — Mick, a former bus driver, Rita, on the dole — who decide to change their lives completely by abandoning civilisation and taking their baby Frances to live in a hut in the wilds of America, on the slopes of Mount Coyote in north Washington state.

But they find that they cannot escape themselves; no matter how much they love each other and their child, and they cannot escape their own childhood demons. Far from finding peace and harmony in the wild, their love goes sour. Mick starts to drink, to smoke pot, to have terrible moods, to abuse Rita with foul, unforgivable words, to beat her up.

Yet Rita still loves him and tries to protect him from the consequences of his rage, and he in turn feels dreadful guilt at what he is doing to her and to their relationship. But eventually she turns for solace to Ryan, a local poacher. Should she go off with him to protect the baby and escape the nightmare? Or should she stay with Mick?

It is a moving, beautifully written tale, taut with narrative tension and memorable for its superb descriptions of landscape and a multitude of deft touches that always seem just right. Above all, this is a genuinely romantic novel, a double love story of love that is raw and raunchy as well as romantic.

GRAHAM LORD

Contributors: Lucy Lethbridge, Fiona Hook, Victoria Walker, Alison Burns, Ariadne Birnberg, Fanny Blake.

GOING OUT

CHILDREN

LONDON

Barnes Village Fair
Activities, stalls and competitions at this traditional English country fair.
Barnes Common, Church Road, SW13 (0181-878 2359). Today, 11am-5pm; free.

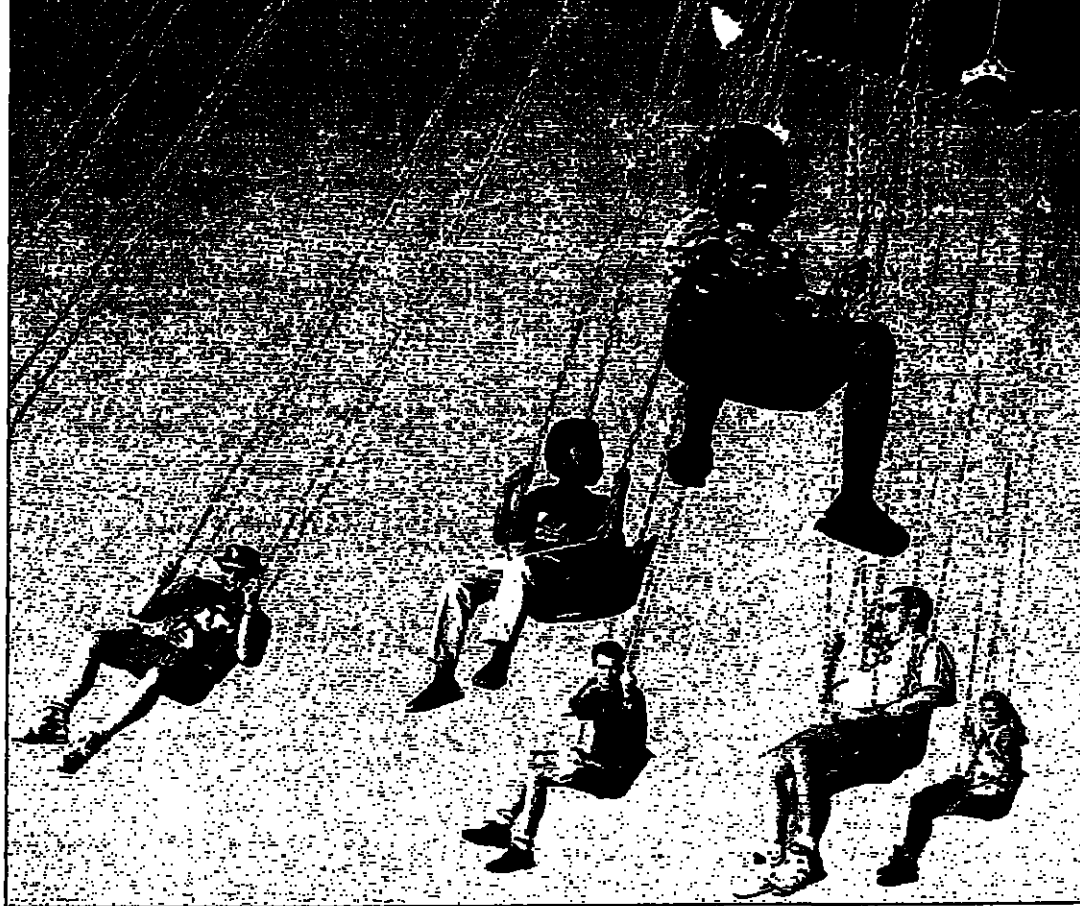
Billy Banjo's Music Show
Billy joins forces with his alien pal in this adventure for three to eight-year-olds.
Warehouse Theatre, Dingwall Road, Croydon (0181-680 4060). Today, 11am; £2.95, child £1.95.

Children's Summer Funfair
Activities include a bouncy castle and helter-skelter rides in this miniature fair.
Alexandra Park, Wood Green, N22. Today, tomorrow, midday-7pm; free.

The Emperor's New Clothes
Puppet entertainment about the story of two swindlers. For three to seven-year-olds.
Little Angel Marionette Theatre, Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, N1 (0171-226 1787). Today, tomorrow, 11am and 3pm; £5, concs £4.50.

From Fisticuffs to Swords
Eight-year-olds to adults are invited to join a workshop investigating fighting on film.
Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 (0171-600 3699). Tomorrow, 12.45pm-2pm and 3.30pm; £3.50, child £1.75.

Storytelling Workshops
Six to 14-year-olds are invited to join Vetta Alexs and explore magical tales about loyal friends and courageous travellers.
British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1 (0171-412 7797). Tomorrow, 3-4.30pm; free.



Just hanging about: funfairs and shows abound as the summer holidays get under way

Wood for the Trees
Sculpture, games and shows in this forest fair.
East Sheen Common, off Fife Road, Richmond (0181-332 2184). Today, 10am-6pm, tomorrow, 11am-6pm; free.

REGIONAL

BELFAST
The Children's Collection
Children's collections, from antique to contemporary.
Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens (01232-383 000/381 251). Today, 1-5pm, tomorrow; free.

CORNWALL

Torro Family Day
Bands, stalls, children's entertainment and a busking competition.
Boscawen Park, Malpas (01872 74766). Tomorrow, 1.30-5pm; free.

DOWNPATRICK

The Vikings
Exhibition with high-tech facilities including hands-on exhibits, videos and CD-Rom.
Down County Museum, The Mall (01396-615 218). Today, tomorrow, 2-5pm; free.

HUDDERSFIELD

Alice
The classic tale of Alice journeying through Wonderland in this theatre production for four-year-olds and above.
Lawrence Batley Theatre, Queen Street (01484 425 336). Mats 2.15pm, tonight, 7pm, ends tomorrow; £7, child £5.

KENT

Bede Show
Family show incorporating two arenas, food hall, horticultural show, funfair and family circus.

Danson Park
Danson Road, Bexleyheath (01322 351 666). Today, tomorrow, 10.30am-5pm; free.

LANCASHIRE

Activity weekend
Gold panning sessions, guided tours, fossil hunts and family entertainment.
Clitheroe Castle Museum, Castle Hill (01200 24635). Today, tomorrow, 11am-5pm; £1, child 25p.

LISNASKEA

Upper Erne Water Festival
Powerboat races, sky diving, parasailing, jet skiing, spectacular displays and fun events for all.
Lough Erne, Co Fermanagh (01365 323 110). Event times vary, ends today, phone for details.

MANCHESTER

Vivid
Visual arts workshop for 11 to 16-year-olds.
Cornerhouse, Oxford Street (0161-228 2463). Today, 11.30am; £2.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Children's Gallery
Games, toys and art for the under-fives.
Laing Art Gallery, Higham Place (0191-232 7734). Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow, 2-5pm; free.

PAISLEY

Mad-cap Bob
Mad-cap Bob concocts magic tricks.
Paisley Arts Centre, New Street (0141-887 1010). Today, 1pm; £1-£2.

SHEFFIELD

Sheffield Children's Festival
Stalls, games and the mayor's parade today.
Various venues, (0114-272 5947). Today, tomorrow, 10am-5pm; free.

THEATRE

LONDON

Birdy
William Wharton's novel about a boy's obsession with flight: adapted by Naomi Wallace; Kevin Knight directs.
Lyric Studio, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 (0181-741 2311). Tonight, 8pm; mat, 4.30pm.

John's Maids
Imaginary account of Jean Genet hiring two actresses to play the desperate, hate-filled servants in *The Maids*, directed by Beth Wood.
Wimbledon Studio, 103 Broadway, SW19 (0181-542 6141). Tonight, 8pm.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

LONG DAYS' JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

Eugene O'Neill said he wrote this autobiographical play in "tears and blood"; and Laurence Boswell's intelligent production convinces you he was not understating. Penelope Wilton gives one of the performances of her life as the mother who hits the morphine and becomes a sort of accusing ghost, haunting her and the family's agonising past: Richard Johnson, Mark Lambert and Paul Rhys give sound support as, respectively, the bewildered father, the bitter elder brother and Eugene himself, lightly disguised as the tubercular Edmund.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE
Young Vic, The Cut, SE1 (0171-928 6363). Tonight, 7.30pm.

Stanley
Interesting Pam Gems play, with Antony Sher a persuasive Stanley Spencer.
National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2252). Tonight, 7.30pm; mat, 2.30pm. ©



Cottesloe, London: Antony Sher as Stanley Spencer

The Tempest
Excellent Denis Quillay plays Prospero in Patrick Garland's production. Expect magic.
Open Air Theatre, Regents Park, NW1 (0171-486 2431). Tonight, 8pm; mat, 2.30pm. In rep.

REGIONAL

BRIGHTON
Absent Friends
Gareth Tudor Price directs Alan Ayckbourn's dissection of marital stress and social embarrassment.
Theatre Royal, New Road (01273-328 488). Tonight, 7.45pm; mat, 2.30pm.

COVENTRY
The Woman in Black
Stephen Mallatratt's delicious adaption of Susan Hill's gothic novel of revenge from beyond the grave.
Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square (01203-553 055). Tonight, 8pm.

POP

CRITIC'S CHOICE

JACKSON BROWNE
Despite a lengthy spell in the wilderness, Jackson Browne remains essentially unchanged from his days as the archetypal 1970s Californian singer-songwriter. His current album, *Looking East*, harnesses the latest instalment of self-confessional lyrics to another batch of mature, soft rock tunes, further building on the foundations established by his 1993 comeback album, *I'm Alive*. Backed by the same musicians who accompanied him on his shows two years ago, he remains a thoughtful, if at times disconcertingly mellow performer.

DAVID SINCLAIR
Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow (0141-332 6633). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.30pm; £18-£21.

LONDON

Boyzone
Irish teenage band.
Wembley Arena, Empire Way (0181-900 1234). Tonight, tomorrow, 6.30pm; £13.50.

The Eagles, Kenny Wayne Shepherd
Reformed country-rock giants of the 1970s.
Wembley Stadium, Empire Way (0181-900 1234). Today, tomorrow, 4pm; £25-£30.

Gabrielle
British soul singer continues her month-long Sunday night residency.
Ronnie Scott's, Friar Street, W1 (0171-439 0747). Tomorrow, 8pm; £8.50.

Rhythms of the Sun
Celebration of music from Brazil, South Africa and Cuba, featuring Tinbalada, Sonora La Calle and Bayete.
Brixton Recreation Centre, Brixton Station Road, SW9 (0171-926 9780). Tonight, 9.30pm; £10-£12.

REGIONAL

CARDIFF
Tina Turner
Rock's glamorous granny on stage one more time.
Cardiff Arms Park, (01222 230 130). Tomorrow, 4pm, phone for availability.



London: Gabrielle

DUBLIN
Bon Jovi
Tousle-haired pomp-rockers does his annual tour of the stadiums.
Royal Dublin Society Showgrounds, Ballsbridge (00 353 1 456 9569). Tonight, 7pm; £24.50-£26.50.

Felle 96
Pulp, Cast and Super Furry Animals.
The Point, East Link Bridge (00 353 1

836 3633). Tonight, 5.30pm; £20.

MALTON
Chris De Burgh
The *Lady in Red* balladeer plays an outdoor show.
Castle Howard, (0541 500 541). Tonight, 8.30pm; £25.

MOTHERWELL
T in the Park: Pulp
Radiohead, the Bluetones, Strathclyde Country Park, (0141-556 5555). Today, tomorrow, 11am; £45, £26.50 per day.

SALISBURY
Larmer Tree Music Festival
Folk from Shoglenity, Kora Colours, and Coope Boys and Simpson.
Larmer Tree, Tollard Royal (01722 415 223). Today, tomorrow, midday; £35, day tickets available.

JAZZ

LONDON
Herb Alpert with the Jeff Lorber Band
Warm-toned easy listening trumpet joins fusion synth wizard Lorber.
Jazz Café, Parkway, NW1 (0171-344 0044). Tomorrow, 7pm; £16 adv £15.50.

Oscar D'Leon Y Su Orquesta
The Venezuelan "Lion of Salsa", here with his New York-styled 15-piece.
Equinox, Leicester Square, WC2 (0171-437 1446). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £15.



Birmingham: Carol Kidd

CRITIC'S CHOICE
JACKY TERRASSON
Artistry and athleticism find a perfect balance in the work of the young Franco-American pianist. Educated in Paris and now based in New York, he made a spectacular debut on the Blue Note label last year. He appears on the final day of the London Soul and Jazz Festival, with the crossover singer Al Jarreau.

Clive Davis
Brixton Academy, London SW9 (0171-924 9999). Tomorrow, 7pm; £17.50-£20.

Art Porter
Tony O'Malley Quartet
Eccentric tenor sax populist from Arkansas, with support from soul-jazz singer O'Malley.
Ronnie Scott's, 3633). Tonight, 5.30pm; £20.

Frith Street, W1 (0171-439 0747). Tonight, 9pm; £12.

David Sanborn Group
Slick, blues-based fusion saxist from Florida, best known for his session work with the likes of Stevie Wonder and David Bowie.
Brixton Academy, Stockwell Road, SW9 (0171-924 9999). Tomorrow, 8pm; £12.50-£17.50.

David Sanchez Quintet
Hispanic, Latin-edged tenorist from New York, a prodigy of Dizzy Gillespie.
The Rhythmic, Chapel Market, N1 (0171-713 5859). Tonight, 8pm; £10.

REGIONAL

BIRMINGHAM
Drummin' Man: Tribute to Gene Krupa
Drummers Pete York, Brian Dee and Cozy Powell pay tribute to the swing drum wizard with help from saxist Alan Barnes, trumpeter Bruce Adams, vibist Ray Alexander and trombonist Roy Williams.
Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street (0121-643 4525). Tomorrow, 8pm; £10.

Carol Kidd
Internationally ranked Scots cabaret singer.
Ronnie Scott's, Broad Street (0121-643 4525). Tonight, 7.30pm; £12.

HUDDERSFIELD
Mark Nightingale with the BBC Big Band
Repertory trombonist features on Barry Forgie's arrangements of Glenn Miller, Stan Kenton, Ted Heath and Count Basie.
Town Hall, Albion Street (01484 430 528). Tomorrow, 7.15pm; £7-£10, concs available.

LEEDS
Barungwa
Anglo-South African street-funk outfit.
The Yardbird Suite Jazz Club, The Underground, T&C Club, Cookridge Street (0113 230 2669). Tonight, 8.30pm; £5.

OPERA

CRITIC'S CHOICE
EUGENE ONEGIN
Graham Vick's production of Tchaikovsky's monument to romantic melancholy was one of New Glyndebourne's great successes, and this year has gained extra distinction from Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, one of the most "creative" conductors of our time: each performance is a collector's item. Elena Prokina and Wojciech Drabowicz remain the outstanding leads.

Rodney Milnes
Glyndebourne, near Lewes, East Sussex (01273-813 813). Tonight, 5.10pm; £10-£110.

LONDON

Falstaff
Jonathan Finney conducts Verdi's final opera staged by Palace Opera and translated to English.
Holland Park Theatre, Holland Park, Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-602

7856). Tonight, 7.30pm, mat, 2.30pm; £20, concs £14.50.

Four Saints in Three Acts
Virgil Thomson's opera performed by Trinity College of Music with a libretto by Gertrude Stein.
Spitalfields Market Opera, Lamb Street, E1 (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm; £8, concs £4.

Snatched by the Gods and Broken Strings
David Parr directs Param Vir's one-act chamber opera. Markus Stenz conducts the London Sinfonietta.
Almeida Theatre, Almeida Street, N1 (0171-359 4404). Tonight, 8pm; £9.50-£16.50.

REGIONAL

LLANDUDNO
The Doctor of Myddfai
Welsh National Opera staging of a new work by Peter Maxwell Davies to David Pountney's libretto.
North Wales Theatre, Promenade (01492-872 000). Tonight, 7.15pm; £8-£35.

MACCLESFIELD
Tosca
Evelino Pido conducts a production by Jeremy Sautelle of Puccini's melodrama sung by the Royal Opera, with set designs by Renzo Mongiardino.
Civic Halls Open-Air Theatre, Civic Halls Farm (01260 252 322). Tonight, 7.30pm; £12-£18.

COMEDY

LONDON
The Arab and the Jew
Otherwise known as *Omid Djalili* and *Ivor Dembinga*.
The Washington, Englands Lane, NW3 (0171-483 3647). Tomorrow, 8pm; £6.

Armless and Friendly
Benefit for peace with Mark Thomas, Jeremy Hardy, Arthur Smith, Tony Allen, Ivor Cutler.
Hackney Empire, Mare Street, E8 (0181-985 2424). Tomorrow, 8pm; £10.

The Chameleon Crew
Steve Brody, Lee Keen, Neville Raven and friends launch a comedy night.
Look Out Theatre, Samuel Pepys, Mare Street, E8 (0181-985 2424). Tomorrow, 8pm; £3.50.

Comedy Cafe
Martin Davis, Andy Fox, Sean Meo, Jeff Green.
Comedy Cafe, Rivington Street, EC2 (0171-739 5706). Tonight, 8.30pm; £8.

Chiswick Comedy Club
With Mark Maier, Kevin Hayes, Steve Murray.
Rowan's Cafe Bar, Stilehall Parade, Chiswick High Road, W4 (0181-742 1649). Tonight, 9pm; £6.

Comedy Store Players
With Josie Lawrence, Paul Merton, Lee Simpson, Jim Sweeney, Neil Mullarkey.
Comedy Store, 7856). Tonight, 7.30pm, mat, 2.30pm; £20, concs £14.50.

Oxendon Street, SW1 (01426-914 433). Tomorrow, 8pm; £10.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

HARRY HILL
Richmond Theatre's high-class Comedy Week rounds off tonight with Harry Hill. Ironically quipped and nuttily quipping, this medic-turned-madcap comic may be an acquired taste but has established quite a cult following. Rambling at a surreal speed, he jumbles up witty observations with knowingly rubbishy old gags, litters his witterings with retro brand names and often interrupts proceedings with silly versions of pop songs and hopeless home videos.

KATE BASSETT
Richmond Theatre, The Green, Richmond (0181-940 0220). Tonight, 7.45pm; £11-£15.

Edinburgh Preview: Dominic Holland
Award-winning thoughtful observations.
Pleasance London (above Shillibears Brasserie Bar), Carpenters Mews, North Road, N7 (0171-609 1800). Tomorrow, 8.30pm; £6.

Hampstead Clinic
Edinburgh Preview
Herstices, Ali Jay, Suzanne Smith and Laura Shavin, plus Stand-Up Women, Marion Pashley, Gina Ryan and Liz Webb.
Hampstead Clinic at C.E. Aldwinckles, Corner Fleet Road and Pond Street, NW3 (0171-485 2112). Tonight, 9pm; £5.

REGIONAL

BIRMINGHAM
Glee Club
Ian Stone, Andy Robinson, Dave Thompson.
The Glee Club, Hurst Street (0121-622 2248). Tonight, 8.30pm; £8.50.

ARMLESS AND FRIENDLY
Benefit for peace with Mark Thomas, Jeremy Hardy, Arthur Smith, Tony Allen, Ivor Cutler.
Hackney Empire, Mare Street, E8 (0181-985 2424). Tomorrow, 8pm; £10.

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Comedy Store, 7856). Tonight, 7.30pm, mat, 2.30pm; £20, concs £14.50.

FAIRS SHOWS

LONDON
Action Man Convention
Thirtieth birthday celebrations for the popular 12-inch combat toy.
Wembley Conference Centre, Empire Way, Wembley (0171-482 4000). Tomorrow, 10am-6pm; £2, child £1.

Record and CD Fair
Catering for the record collector and the music enthusiast.
Watermans Arts Centre, Brentford High Street, Brentford (0181-568 1176). Tomorrow, 10.30am-4.30pm; admission free.

The Royal Tournament
A show of skills from the Army, Navy and RAF.
Earls Court Exhibition Centre, Warwick Road, SW5 (0171-373 8141). Tonight, 7.30pm, mats today, tomorrow, 2pm; £5-£25.



London: Royal Tournament

Streets of London Festival
Annual event celebrating the art of street theatre.
Streets of London Festival Information, Various venues, Canary Wharf, E14 (0171-481 3073). Today, tomorrow, times vary; phone for details.

REGIONAL

CHEPSTOW
Chepstow Festival 96
Craft fair, live music, 1970s disco night, street entertainment, plus Mark Lamarr and Jeff Green in the comedy tent tomorrow night.
Festival Office, Various venues (01291 621 399). Today, tomorrow, 10am-midnight; daytime events, free, evening events start at £1.50, tomorrow's comedy night, £7.

EAST MOLESEY
Hampton Court Palace Flower Show
A gardener's delight, set in the historical grounds for added atmosphere.
Hampton Court Palace, (0171-344 4444). Today, 10am-7.30pm, ends tomorrow, 10am-5.30pm; £5-£15, under five's free.

IRVINESTOWN
Lady of the Lake Festival
Tyne to celebrate myth of the eerie woman walking on water. Events include beach party, band recital and sheep dog trials and competitions.
Ulster Lakeland Equestrian Park and various venues, (01365-323 110/621 919). Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow, 11am-5pm; mostly free.

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These new top quality Copitar ZIP compact zoom binoculars weigh just 260 gms and measure a mere 115x12x42mm. They're sufficiently small and light to pop in a pocket or bag, but with up to 25 times magnification, powerful enough for virtually any sporting or leisure activity.

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GALLERIES

LONDON
Assembling the Family
Comprehensive survey of
work from the photographic
genre of family portraiture.
National Portrait Gallery,
St Martin's Place, WC2 (0171-
306 0055). Today, 10am-6pm;
tomorrow, midday-6pm; free.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

DUTCH FLOWER PAINTING
Flower painting has always been
regarded, outside Holland at
least, as an agreeable but minor
genre, and the show at Dulwich
Picture Gallery is apparently the
first international loan exhibition
of the form in this country. The
rules of the flower picture as
practised in Holland between
1600 and 1750 are fairly tight:
usually a vase, occasionally a
wreath of varied flowers is dis-
played against a black or very
dark background, and there may
be a small still-life at the base, but
only rarely does it go so far as to
enclose a portrait or a religious
scene within the flower arrange-
ment. One of the most pleasur-
able art experiences in London
for a long time.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR
Dulwich Picture Gallery,
College Road, London SE21
(0181-693 5254). Today, 11am-5pm;
tomorrow, 2-5pm; £2, concs £1.

Philip-Lorca diCorcia
diCorcia's latest work
documents the real-life characters
around Los Angeles, placing
them in a seedy, fantasy
environment.

Photographers' Gallery,
Great Newport Street, WC2
(0171-831 1772). Today, 11am-6pm;
admission free.

William Morris
Exhibition of the British
designer, radical thinker and
innovator's work.



Bradford: Irving Penn's photograph of Three Rissani women with bread, Morocco, 1971

Victoria and Albert Museum,
Cromwell Road, SW7 (0171-938
8500). Today, tomorrow, 10am-
5.30pm; £5.50, concs £3.25.

Mountain Gloom, Mountain
Glory
Collection of mountain
scenery by Palmer, Turner and
Cozens.

Tate Gallery,
Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8000).
Today, 10am-5.50pm, tomorrow,
2-6pm; free.

REGIONAL

ABERDEEN
The Colour of Light: Art
The work of four Scottish
Colourists — Peopole, Fergusson.

Hunter and Cadell
Aberdeen Art Gallery,
Schoolhill (01224 646 333).
Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow, 2-
5pm; free.

BRADFORD
Penn on Penn
Work by Irving Penn, the
master of still life, fashion

and beauty photography.
National Museum of
Photography, Film and
Television,
Piccadilly (0171-727 488).
Today, tomorrow, 10.30am-6pm;
admission free.

EDINBURGH
Alberto Giacometti
Comprehensive collection of
work from the master.
Scottish National Gallery of
Modern Art,
Belford Road (0131-556 8921).
Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow, 2-
5pm; £4, concs £2.50.

GLASGOW
Craigie Aitchison
First important retrospective
to celebrate the painter's 80th
birthday.
Gallery of Modern Art,
Queen Street (0141-331 1854).
Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow,
11am-5pm; free.

ROCHDALE
Masters of Camera
The late Jo Spence's critically
acclaimed images of her body in
collaboration with Rosy
Martin.
Rochdale Art Gallery,
Esplanade (01706-342 154).
Today, 10am-4pm; free.

SOUTHAMPTON
Impressionist Paintings from
Le Havre
With work by Monet, Sisley
and Pissarro.
Southampton City Art
Gallery,
Civic Centre (01703 832 151).
Today, 10am-4pm, tomorrow,
2-5pm; free.

WAKEFIELD
Kenneth Armitage: 80th
Birthday Survey
Important retrospective of the
artist's drawings and sculptures.
Yorkshire Sculpture Park,
Bretton Hall (01924-630 302).
Today, tomorrow, dawn to dusk;
admission free.

COMING SOON



London: The Two Gentlemen of Verona at the Globe Theatre

LONDON
July 23-Sep 2
Paint Your Wagon
Lerner and Loewe's classic
1951 musical is revived as this
year's musical at the Open
Air Theatre in Regent's Park.
Box office: 0171-486 2431/
1933.

July 30-Aug 31
Hedda Gabler
Promising young actress
Alexandra Gilbreath takes the
title role in English Touring
Theatre's production of Ibsen's
drama at the Donmar
Warehouse. Box office:
0171-369 1732.

Aug 21-Sep 15
The Two Gentlemen of
Verona
The reconstructed Globe
Theatre opens on the South
Bank with Jack Shepherd
directing Mark Rylance in
Shakespeare's early and
enticing romantic comedy. Box
office: 0171-401 9919.

REGIONAL

CARDIFF
From Sep 14
Don Giovanni
Katie Mitchell makes her
opera directorial debut with a
new production of Mozart's
comedy for Welsh National
Opera. After opening at
Cardiff's New Theatre, where it
plays on September 14, 19,
24, 27 and 30. It tours to Oxford,
Birmingham, Plymouth,
Southampton, Bristol and
Liverpool. Box office:
01222 875 889.

NATIONWIDE
Sep 23-28
Mary Chapin Carpenter/
Lyle Lovett
Roots double-bill touring to
Manchester Arena (Sep 23, 0161-
930 8000), SECC, Glasgow
(Sep 24, 0141-248 9999), NEC,
Birmingham (Sep 26, 0121-
780 4133), Wembley Arena,
London (Sep 27, 0181-900
1234), The Point, Dublin (Sep 28,
00 3531 836 3633).

RELIGION

LONDON
Nazarene Gospel Choir
A black gospel choir from
Clapham will be guests at
London Lights, a Christian
celebration at Westminster
Central Hall, off Victoria
Street, London SW1 (tonight,
7.30pm). Joel Edwards,
director of the Evangelical
Alliance in Britain, will be
speaking. Supporting act will
be Free Spirit, a Christian
dance group from
Chesham, Surrey.
Telephone the Rev Mike
Bossingham (01628 26533).

REGIONAL
OXFORDSHIRE
New musical Damascus
Dawn, based on St Paul's
Damascus road
experience. Written by two
Bristol University music
graduates and performed by a
choir and band from
Oxfordshire churches. Today
and tomorrow, 7.30pm. St
Andrew's School, Chinnor.
Free tickets: 01844-353 748.

YORKSHIRE
Selby Abbey, Selby
The final concert in this
summer's Live Music at the
Abbey series. Fauré's
beautiful Requiem and
Cantique de Jean Racine,
plus a rare opportunity to
hear Dr Francis Jackson's
drama Daniel in Babylon,
originally written for the
festivities which marked the
opening of the rebuilt
Coventry Cathedral. Dr
Jackson will play the
organ, joined by Lucy Bates,

soprano, and Ian Colson,
bass. Tonight; tickets £3,
concs £2, on the door, or
telephone Dr Roger Tebbet
(01904-416 219).

MANCHESTER
The city's new Buddhist
Centre will open today amid
the debris caused by the
recent bomb. A six-storey
warehouse has been
transformed into a centre of
creativity and spiritual
community, part of the
Friends of the Western
Buddhist Order, a worldwide
movement based in
Britain. Local Buddhists
have worked with
architects to combine the
original structure with
Buddhist images. Opening
ceremony involving
consecration of Buddha statue
at 2.30pm, conducted by
Sangharakshita, founder of
the Friends.
16-20 Turner Street (0161-
834 9232).

FILMS

Films in London and
(where indicated with the
symbol ♦) on release
across the country

NEW RELEASES

♦ **THE CABLE GUY** (12)
Obnoxious comedy with
Jim Carrey as a pathological
cable television technician.
With Matthew Broderick.
Director, Ben Stiller.
Clapham Picture House
(0171-498 3323) MGMs:
Chelsea (0171-352 5096)
Troadero (0171-434 0033)
Odeons: Kensington

(01426 914666) Swiss
Cottage (01426 914098) UCI
Whiteleys (0171-792
3332) Virgin Fulham Road
(0171-370 2636) Warner
West End (0171-437 4343)



Disney's The Hunchback of Notre Dame: Choice

**THE CELLULOID
CLOSET** (15)
Absorbing documentary
about the treatment of gays in
mainstream movies.
Directors, Rob Epstein and
Jeffrey Friedman.
Ritz (0171-737 2121) Screen
on Baker Street (0171-935
2772) Virgin Haymarket
(0171-839 1527)

FEAST OF JULY (15)
Love and tragedy in late
Victorian England. Turgid
drama from H.E. Bates's
novel, with Embeth Davidtz
and Ben Chaplin.
Director, Christopher
Menaul.
Odeon Haymarket (01426-
915 353)

♦ **KINGPIN** (12)
Unfunny comedy about
hustlers on the road, with
Woody Harrelson, Randy
Quaid and Bill Murray.
MGMs: Baker Street
(0171-935 9772) Chelsea (0171-
352 5096) Odeons:
Kensington (01426-914 666)
Swiss Cottage (0171-586
3057) West End (01426-915 574)
UCI Whiteleys (0171-792
3332)

**THE ITT AND THE
MOON** (18)
The sexual development of
a nine-year-old boy.
Unexpected magic from
Catalan director Bigas Luna.
MGMs: Piccadilly (0171-
437 3561) Tottenham Court
Road (0171-636 6148)

CRITIC'S CHOICE
**THE HUNCHBACK OF
NOTRE DAME** (U)
The famous novel by Victor
Hugo is not natural material for
a Disney cartoon, but there
is enough dramatic
thrill and fine animation to
sweep you into the story of the
deformed bellringer Quasi-
modo (voiced by Tom Hulce)
and the injustices of medieval
Paris. Directed by Gary
Trosdale and Kirk Wise.

Geoff Brown
Odeon Leicester Square
(01426 415 683)

♦ **CURRENT**
♦ **MISSION:
IMPOSSIBLE** (PG)
Rousing set-pieces dwarf
the stars, even Tom Cruise's
special agent, in this
enjoyable revival of the
television series. Director,
Brian De Palma.

Barbican (0171-638 8891)
Clapham Picture House (0171-
498 3323) Empire (0800-888
911) MGMs: Chelsea (0171-352
5096) Tottenham Court
Road (0171-636 6148)
Troadero (0171-434
0031) Notting Hill Coronet (0171-
727 6705) Odeons:
Kensington (01426 914666)
Marble Arch (01426
914501) Swiss Cottage (01426
914098) Plaza (0171-437
1234) Ritz (0171-737 2121)
Screen/Baker Street (0171-
935 2772) Screen/Green (0171-
226 3520) UCI Whiteleys (0171-
792 3332) Virgin Fulham
Road (0171-370 2636) Rio
(0171-254 6677)

CLASSICAL
♦ **LONDON**
Composers Ensemble
Songbook
Contemporary composers'
work in a three-part concert.
Almeida Theatre,
Almeida Street, NI (0171-
359 4404). Tomorrow, 5pm;
admission £10.

London Symphony
Orchestra/Nagano
The London Symphony
Chorus perform Berlioz's
production of the Faust
legend.
Barbican Hall,
Barbican Centre, EC2
(0171-638 8891). Tomorrow,
7.30pm; £6-£30.

London Schools
Symphony Orchestra/Pope
Ravel's Rhapsodie
Espagnole, plus Rodrigo's
Guitar Concerto.
Kenwood,
Hamstead Lane, NW3
(0171-413 1443). Tonight,
7.30pm; £10.50 and £11,
concs £8.50.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

ENLIGHTENED DECADE
The Orchestra of the Age
of Enlightenment was founded
by some of London's top
period-instrument players as
an act of rebellion: they felt
that certain Baroque-music
conductors (no names) had
become too big for their
batons, and they wanted to set
up an orchestra that chose its
own conductors. Ten years
on, the OAE is a triumphant
success. It celebrates with this
performance of Haydn's *Creation*
under a conductor
whom everybody wants to
work with: Roger Norrington.
Richard Morrison
Queen Elizabeth Hall,
South Bank, London SE1
(0171-960 4242). Tonight,
7.45pm.

Peter Donohoe
The pianist performs an
all- Chopin evening.
Highlights include the
Sonata No 2.
Wigmore Hall,
Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-
935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm;
£9-£16.

♦ **REGIONAL**
BIRMINGHAM
CBSO/Oram
Berlioz's classic
Symphonie Fantastique, plus
Nicola Hall playing
Rodrigo's Guitar Concerto.
Symphony Hall,
Broad Street (0121-212
3333). Tonight, 7pm;
£5.50-£25.

CARDIFF
Royal Philharmonic/
Arwel Hughes
The Swansea Bach Choir
perform Mendelssohn's
oratorio Elijah.
St David's Hall,
The Hayes (01222 878 444).
Tonight, 7.30pm; £4-£18.50.

LICHFIELD
BBC National Orchestra
of Wales/Hurst
Brühns's First Symphony
and Tassini Little playing
Sibelius's Violin Concerto.
The Cathedral,
01543 257 557. Tonight,
7pm; £7-£22.50.

LIVERPOOL
Liverpool Philharmonic/
Davis
With excerpts from
Handel's Messiah and Verdi
choruses.
King's Dock,
0151-225 6351. Tonight,
7.30pm; £7.50-£12.50,
concs £6.75.



Choice: Roger Norrington conducts Baroque music

YORK
Consort of Musick
Late 16th-century works,
including the closing
sequence from the first
opera, Caccini's *Il rapimento
di cefalo*.
Sir Jack Lyons Hall,
University of York,
Heslington (01904 658 338).
Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £15,
concs £13.

DANCE

♦ **LONDON**
Banyumas Bamboo
Gamelan: Rhythm Sticks
First performances abroad
from this Javanese music and
dance company.
Queen Elizabeth Hall,
South Bank Centre, SE1
(0171-960 4242). Tomorrow,
7.45pm; £8-£14, concs
£6-£12.

Royal Ballet School
Dance students in a
trilogy of performances,
choreographed by David
 Bintley, Ninette de Valois and
Christopher Wheeldon.
Royal Opera House,
Covent Garden, WC2
(0171-304 4000). Today;
midday; £2-£34.
South African Music
Village
Street performers, dancers
and musicians from South
Africa celebrate President
Mandela's visit.
Regent's Park,
Hanover Gate, NW1 (0171-
486 7905). Today, tomorrow,
2-6.30pm; free.

Ruth Gledhill finds a strong sense of spirituality in an island church

This peaceful communion



TO OUTSIDERS, the
church of St Tysilio is
known as the "land-
silo" in "Llanfairpwllgwyllgog-
erychwyndrobwillantysliogogoch"
means: "St Mary's church in the hollow
of the white hazel, near a rapid whirlpool
and the church of St Tysilio near the red
cave". To locals, this 15th-century
church is a sanctuary of spirituality
where something close to the original
Celtic Christianity can still be savoured.
The church is built over the small cell
of St Tysilio, a prince of Wales and
cousin of St Asaf who retreated here
from the continuous warfare of built life
in 6th-century Britain and built a
hermitage as a place to enjoy the solitary,
contemplative life. In a community that
is still largely Welsh-speaking, the
church nestles among slate gravestones
on a small island between Thomas
Telford's and Robert Stephenson's two
great bridges across the Menai Strait.
With thick walls and solid wooden
beams that have withstood centuries of
the appalling weather which drives all
but the hardiest away, it is also holding
out fast against the advances of modern
technology. Unheated and without elec-
tricity, the building for our eight o'clock
midsummer communion was cold, and
dimly lit by flickering candlelight and
gaslight. I was advised not to sit beneath

the candelabra so as to avoid hot,
dripping wax. Sadly, but probably
inevitably given the dismal weather, the
island church is only used for commu-
nion and evensong in the summer
months, and in winter the eight o'clock
is held at nearby St Mary's.
The whirlpools can still suck a
swimmer down into the treacherous
swells created by the strong tides in the
water outside, the sea that sank the
former battleship, HMS Conway, in
1953. The church, reached by a short
walk through a forest, is connected to the
mainland by a narrow causeway but the
sense of danger lurking in the surround-

ing deeps is never quite overcome. We
were among the first to arrive for eight
o'clock communion, heralded by one
small bell muffled in the damp air, but
within a few minutes the 13 pews, which
could seat two in comfort and three at a
squeeze, were tightly packed with more
than 30 worshippers.

"Grant us, Lord, we beseech thee, the
spirit to think and do always such things
as be rightful," said Canon Richard
Jones, the vicar, in the collect, speaking
with a musical lilt, almost as if he would
rather be singing. "Let love be genuine;
hate what is evil, hold fast to what is
good." We heard in the reading from
Romans, "Do not be overcome by evil
but overcome evil with good." We were
told to "bless those who persecute you;
bless and do not curse them".

Canon Jones led us in prayer: "Let us
pray for Scotland as they try to seek
independence and home rule," he said.
"In our own diocese we pray for the
province of Wales." We prayed for the
local councillors. We prayed for peace,
and for an end to the suffering of the
innocents. "Above all, we pray for a
renewal within the church," he said.
Returning to the 20th century by a
walk back through the forest, I won-
dered whether renewal might best be
achieved not by making congregations
larger, but by making churches smaller,
to achieve the greater spirituality we
found in St Tysilio's tiny church.

St Tysilio Church, Church Island,
Menai Bridge, Anglesey, Gwynedd,
North Wales (01248 750 546).

AT YOUR SERVICE

★ A five-star guide ★

VICAR: Canon Richard Jones.

ARCHITECTURE: simple 15th-century
rectangular structure with beautiful
stained glass window depicting the
morning of the resurrection. ★★ ★ ★

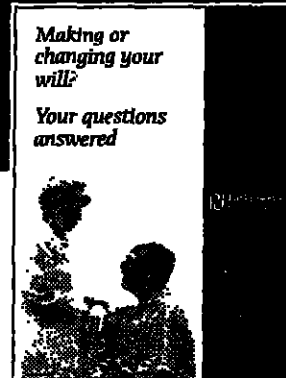
LITURGY: the service was in English,
from the 1984 Church in Wales Book of
Common Prayer. ★★ ★ ★

MUSIC: none at this service, although a
gleaming wooden pedal organ serves
the church at other times.

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: none for us but
from Wednesday July 17 to Sunday July
21 there will be weekday services and
the church will be open throughout the
day with morning coffee and afternoon
tea, in a flower festival to celebrate St
John's gospel.

SPIRITUAL HIGH: contemplative.

Only one charity's guide to Will making has Plain English Campaign's Crystal Mark



Ours

Our free Will Guide is full of
essential information about
making or changing a Will.
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English Campaign's Crystal
Mark, so you should find it
clear and easy to understand.

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my Will which has gained Plain English Campaign's
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Parkinson's
Disease Society

Croatia: where time slips away in the shadow of medieval city walls or on deserted Adriatic island beaches



Alone in a city restored to peace

Entering Dubrovnik is much easier than before the war. The Ploce Gate is no longer jammed with tourists, the Stradun is quieter, and there is more room on the beach. In fact, the odds are against seeing another British tourist during your stay in Croatia.

While restaurateurs and hotel managers may wring their hands, it is perfect for visitors enjoying Dubrovnik in its first summer of real peace since 1991 when more than 2,000 shells fell on the city.

The medieval walls withstood the bombardment well and the destruction of the city, although extensive, was not as great as had been feared. A few shell marks remain on pavements and walls, but the smooth limestone of the Stradun is completely restored. Walking along the city wall it is easy to spot the new roofs with their bright red tiles.

Most museums have reopened. A highlight is the apothecary museum in the Franciscan monastery. Here you can also find the pharmacy, which has worked without interruption since 1317, and where people drop in to buy both modern remedies and herbal preparations.

It takes just under a day for a leisurely tour of the remaining museums and churches. It's worth buying a guidebook before you arrive because most local ones have not been revised since the war.

Good intentions of thorough sightseeing and detailed examination of baroque churches may well slip away as you sip your coffee. The city is perfectly proportioned, given over to pedestrians and relaxing.

In the evenings people gather at the cafes to watch the world go by. The wide main street of the Stradun becomes a living room for the inhabitants, who put on their best clothes and stroll up and down. Recommended is the Caffe Troubadour next to the cathedral, which is a meeting place for musicians and artists.

Concerts in the Rector's Palace are another delightful way to pass the evening. The annual Dubrovnik Summer Festival, which started this week and runs until August 25, is expected to attract thousands of people. The tradition of performing Hamlet on the city walls will be continued by the Croatian National Theatre of Zagreb.

Entrance to the small, pebbled beach just outside the city walls is now free, although umbrellas and deckchairs are no longer available for hire. The beach is empty compared

with pre-war times, but it still becomes crowded when school children are on holiday. Those seeking more space should take a boat to the island of Lokrum, opposite the city. Departures are every half hour and return tickets cost just over a £1 for the 15-minute journey. The island's rocky outcrops make ideal platforms for sunbathing, although it may take a while to get used to lying on stone. There are ladders into the sea, but elsewhere agility may be needed for clambering across the rocks. Part of the beach is reserved for nudists.

The island was one of the first natural reserves to be protected by the former Yugoslavia after the Second World War, and is dense with pine forests and vegetation. The botanical gardens are rather overgrown, but still pleasant to wander around. Even though Lokrum is small, the few tourists mean that it is possible to spend a day without seeing another person.



Few tourists visit the village of Mlini, just outside Dubrovnik on the Dalmatian coast, and yachts no longer jostle for berths in the harbour

castles, ruins dating back from Roman times, part of an early Byzantine palace, a Christian basilica and a romanesque monastery built by the Benedictine monks. Visiting the islands requires some planning because there may not be a boat returning the same day. An easier way is to take the Three Island Cruise, organised by Atlas Travel Agency theoretically once a week. But while I was there last month it was cancelled because there

were so few visitors. So were other excursions by coach along the coast. With surreal optimism, the agency still offers Sunday visits to Cilipi to see traditional folk dancing. This seems reasonable until you realise that Cilipi is deserted and many of its buildings destroyed.

The best way to see villages along the beautiful Dalmatian coast is by hire car. This is easily done at several agencies for about £40 per day and the roads are quite smooth. The villages of Cavtat and Mlini were occupied during the war. There are few signs of destruction, but still the tourists stay away and yachts no longer jostle for space in the small harbours. Once there, there is little to do except relax. The Leut restaurant in Cavtat, overlooking the bay, offers delicious seafood at more reasonable prices than in town.

Along the coast in the other direction, the arboretum at Tresteno, first planted at the turn of the 16th century, offers another green haven, again slightly overgrown. Once more I found myself alone. Dubrovnik and the surrounding area is safe but the message has yet to reach a wider public. Until it does, visitors will have the place to themselves. Take advantage while you can.

LEYLA LINTON

● The author was a guest of the Croatia National Tourist Board



Folk dancing in Cilipi has fallen victim to the war

FACT FILE

a bottle of ordinary wine could set you back £15. Good reds and white are produced on the Peljesac peninsula and islands of Hvar and Korcula. Look out for Grk and Posip whites, and Dingac and Pharos reds. Establishments along the Prijeko, which runs parallel to the Stradun, tend to be avoided by locals, but Rosarij, at the end of the street is an exception. The fish is fresh and you can eat a simple meal here for under £10. The Nautica, just outside the Pile Gate, is more expensive, but its location overlooking the sea and the excellent service make it a very special evening.

■ The 47th Dubrovnik Summer Festival runs from now until August 25. There are more than 60 events, with many performances taking place in open-air venues as well as the Rector's Palace and St Blaise's Church. This year includes contributors from Sweden, Slovenia, Russian and Ireland. Tickets cost from £3.75 to £12.50 and are available from tourist information offices or at the door one hour prior to performance.

■ The kuna is linked to the deutschmark and is non-convertible. This means it may only be obtained in Croatia. The exchange rate is stable at about eight kuna to £1. Sterling is readily accepted as are most major credit cards.

■ There are 1,185 islands in the Croatian Adriatic. Only 66 are inhabited: the largest islands plus the ports of Split, Sibenik, Zadar and Rijeka are served from Dubrovnik by the Jadrolina Line. A sample passenger fare from Dubrovnik to Zadar costs from about £18. Jadrolina is represented in the UK by Dalmatian and Istrian Travel (0171-379 6249).

HOT £25-30

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Summer holiday reading: a selection of some of the best guidebooks available for world travellers...

On tour with the seven ages of man

When I came home from southern Spain last week, I disentangled from my dirty clothing no fewer than five guidebooks. Whatever the weight, there was a reason for taking each of them.

Ian Robertson's *Blue Guide* to mainland Spain, like many in this expanding and continually updated series, is low on atmosphere but tremendous on that art-and-architecture type of information. This is a way of looking that should not be allowed to perish.

Then there was *Seville & Andalusia*, in the new *Eyewitness* series. These meaty little volumes represent a revolution in guidebook publishing in which the real point of departure is almost always the visual image, rather than the text. Each book is an assemblage of 150 or so double-page spreads, many working out through arrows and captions, from a central illustration.

Eyewitness guides have a major competitor in the same field, in the more adventurous, intellectually more demanding and more expensive *Everyman* series, originating with Gallimard in Paris. Both *Eyewitness* and *Everyman* are brilliant on individual cities, less good at general interpretation of an area. There are too many little gobbets, not enough continuous prose.

So I took my *Eyewitness* to help me in Seville but set it aside for Andalusia at large, turning instead to the appropriate *Rough Guide*. These old friends are, in fact, written by young people for young people — personally I don't take much notice of their recommending the third hotel on the right after the bus station. But they are much more inclined to sock it to you in the interpretative department and always full of sympathy for the common folk of any country they write about.

From rather a similar point of view — intelligence and articulacy, and sometimes politics as well — it's always a good idea to carry a *Cadogan Guide*, especially when it is written, as in the case of southern Spain, by that incredibly assiduous (and well-read) team, Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls, true specialists on Mediterranean Europe.

In the case of southern Spain there is also a remarkable extra, published in 1991 but now, lamentably, out of print — the *Penguin Guide to Andalusia* by the even better read and equally thoughtful Michael Jacobs.

So if these are the necessary appurtenances for just one breed of person — essentially the cultural traveller — in just one place — Andalusia — then you will see at once how complicated it has become,



given the explosion in guidebook publishing, to make an adequate selection.

In fact, so daunting are the guidebook shelves you probably need to decide quite firmly what kind of guidebook you are after before you even hit the bookshop. My own system is to think of the seven ages of man and the various requirements of those who occupy each stage.

There isn't much at all written for children, though

any decent little popular guide — the *AA Essentials*, for instance, or the *Berlitz Pocket Guides*, and, in general, the new wave of guides to individual cities — will have a section giving you the lowdown for children, so vital for family visits. But when it comes to students and teenagers, there is a mass of material. This ranges from manuals for vacation jobs at home and abroad to general vade-mecums addressed to hitch-hikers, train

travellers, seekers after cheap accommodation and the rest. A disproportionate number of this latter type are authored by one Katie Wood, unknown to me personally but inescapable by name. And here it is essential to enter a critical note.

For what a traveller must understand is that each "age of man" category is actually a marketing niche and that some publishers try to make the books within each niche as

general as possible to catch the greatest number of readers. Thus a *Globetrotter's Bible* 1996 by Katie Wood will not, by definition, offer very much on any specific destination.

For use abroad, it's best to be specific in your buying. Which brings us back to the *Rough Guides* and to that other excellent series, *Lonely Planet*, the real backpacker's bible, addressed mainly to the adventurous young but highly useful for travellers of all ages.

Lonely Planet has Australian origins and its reputation is strongest in its Asian coverage. But the series is in the middle of an expansion and can now offer everywhere from Ireland to Yemen.

Adventurous travel, of course, no longer means entirely the young; more and more "young retirees" or rat-race escapees can now be met in surprising places or indulging in exceedingly vigorous activity or, by progression, involved in both at once. And here, too, there is a wide range, from specific works on less probable countries (*Lonely Planet* is very strong here) to general works outlining what's available, or on specific activities.

In the first category, the classic *South American*

Handbook, from *Trade and Travel Handbooks*, now in its 72nd year, still reigns supreme, giving a thorough account of many countries only brave hearts would visit.

But there are other contenders, not least Hilary Bradt's hardworking backpacker's guides to strange and potentially threatening places, the best of them an open invitation to the intrepid.

For general planning in this line, you could do a lot worse than James Ogilvie's *Adventure Holidays Worldwide* from In Print. For walking — with often very testing walks in places that sound tame — it is worth being aware of yet another series, published by Sunflower Books under the generic title of *Landscape of...* a particular place.

What's neat about them, apart from good mapping, is that they include car tours and picnics, widening the range of readership in a way that's apt and useful. It's a convergence of mild adventure with family living.

Yet another great sector is dedicated simultaneously to the "empty nester" and to young couples who have the money but haven't the finan-

cial responsibility of children. Most obvious is the vast range of city guides. Many of the publishing houses already mentioned do such guides. It's also worth noting the lively *Time Out* city guides published by Penguin and the city packs from the *AA*, which include a map and a book of suggestions.

But co-existing with the cities, there is a world of luxury, good-fun travel, revelling in add-on extras, particularly food and wine or unusual and unexpected accommodation. Mitchell Beazley publishes a range called *Touring in Wine Country*, with Hugh Johnson as series editor. There is Alastair Sawday's *French Bed and Breakfast*, for example, or *Edible France*, by Glyn Christian (published by Grub Street).

As for old age, there is always Joseph Smith's *Holidays in Retirement* (published by Foulsham), or even, not quite home but not far off, the best of all cultural city guidebooks, *Flemish Cities Explored* by Derek Blyth (published by Pallas Athene), at last in a new edition and with more promise from the same estimable author.

ADAM HOPKINS

GUIDE LINES

- **Blue Guides:** cultural, well illustrated. £11 to £15.
- **Eyewitness Guide:** illuminating on detail. £13 to £20.
- **Everyman Guide:** visual, rather more arty. £17 to £20.
- **Rough Guides:** old folks will also learn. From £8 to £16.
- **Cadogan Guides:** real sense of the meaning of place. From £8 to £18.
- **Lonely Planet:** much-thumbed by the young in spirit. £8 to £17.
- **Berlitz Pocket Guides:** occasionally useful with good city walks. From £5 to £7.
- **AA Essential:** neat and informative. £5.
- **Trade and Travel Handbooks:** aimed at true travellers. £12 to £22.
- **Hilary Bradt, Bradt publications:** hard places for the intrepid. £11.
- **Time Out city guides:** well-informed, sometimes too full for easy use. £9 to £10.
- **AA city packs:** very full maps. £6.
- **Edible France** by Glyn Christian (Grub Street, £9.99).
- **Holidays in Retirement** by Joseph Smith: half for independents, half of it leans on Saga Holidays (Foulsham, £9.99).
- **Stanfords** at BA 156 Regent St, London W1 0HT-434 4744, and at 12-14 Long Acre, W1 probably stocks the most number of guides.



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WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 25

GAIASSA

(c) A high-stemmed vessel with lateen sails used on the Nile for carrying freight. Of Arab origin. *The Times Literary Supplement*, 1938: "The craft in question being, presumably, gaiassas."

ASEPSIS

(a) The absence of micro-organisms likely to cause infection; methods of treatment that, by the use of sterilised instruments etc. are aimed at preventing septic infections. F. J. Thornbury, *The New York Medical Journal*, 1892: "Asepsis permanent and reliable may be accomplished in a simple matter by sterilising the dressings by heat applied in the form of steam."

OPEPE

(b) A West African tree of the family Rubiaceae, or its hard yellowish-brown wood. From Yoruban origin. *Nature*, 1920: "The gamboge-coloured opepe."

SABOT

(a) Any device fitted inside the muzzle of a gun to hold or support the projectile to be fired (as when they are of different calibres).

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TRAVEL

19

... and literature that weaves spells about popular destinations; plus where to shop for French cheeses

The romance of Florence is evoked in E.M. Forster's *A Room with a View*, seen here with Julian Sands and Helena Bonham Carter, in a scene from the Merchant-Ivory film

Rich terrain for bookworms

READING FICTION can be an excellent way of discovering more about where you are on holiday. Below are recommendations of novels or travel literature that give that sense of place which is lacking in many guidebooks.

FRANCE

Many of Guy de Maupassant's *Selected Short Stories* (Penguin £2.99) are set in Rouen and around the Normandy coast. In her classic *Three Rivers of France* (Penguin £10.99), Freda White writes about the Dordogne, the Lot and the Tarn and the country and history through which they run. The recently reissued *Perfume from Provence* (Black Swan £5.99) evokes Provence in the 1930s. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* (Penguin £5.99) the psychiatrist Dick Diver finds his life on the Riviera in the 1920s increasingly empty and meaningless. *Celestine, Voices from a French Village* by Gillian Tindall (Minerva £6.99) is a recreation of a vanished French village, taken from a collection of letters.

SPAIN

Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (Penguin £9.99) was known as the first novel and the spearhead for European

fiction. In *Between Hopes and Memories* (Picador £8.99), Michael Jacobs travels through Spain meeting a wide cross-section of Spaniards. Laurie Lee's classic *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning* (Penguin £5.99) is a delightful book about his walk from Vigo to Malaga in 1936, accompanied by his violin. Gerald Brenan lived in Yegen in the Sierra Nevada for many years and writes about it in *South From Granada* (Penguin £6.99).

GREECE

Mani and Roumeli by Patrick Leigh Fermor (Penguin £7.99) are both full of scholarship and anecdotes about those regions. *The Colossus of Maroussi* (Minerva £5.99) describes Henry Miller's journey to Greece with Lawrence Durrell in 1939.

TURKEY

Iran Orga was born into a prosperous family under the Sultans, but the family was ruined. He records his fam-

ily's survival in *Portrait of a Turkish Family* (Eland £8.99). Yasar Kemal's *Memed, My Hawk* (Harvill £8.99) is a novel set in Anatolia in which Memed escapes a life of servitude and becomes a brigand in the mountains of Anatolia. Jeremy Seal's *A Fez of the Heart* (Picador £6.99) traces the history of the fez, a key to understanding the country.

ITALY

E.M. Forster's *A Room with a View* (Penguin £6.99) is about a group of tourists and expatriates in Florence. Jeanette Winterson's *The Passion* (Penguin £5.99, Bloomsbury Classic £10.99), with a Venetian setting, has been described as "a book of great imaginative audacity".

PORTUGAL

Marion Kaplan's *The Portuguese* (Penguin £8.99) is a history and analysis of Portugal today. *The History of the Siege of Lisbon* by José Saramago (Harvill £8.99) is a novel in which a proof-reader in Lisbon inserts a negative into the history of Portugal. We get a clear idea of 19th-century Portugal through Eca de Queiroz's novel *The Illus-*

trious House of Ramires (Quartet £7.99), about a Portuguese aristocrat involved in literature and politics.

CYPRUS

Lawrence Durrell was entranced by Cyprus where he became a teacher in the 1950s and wrote *Bitter Lemons* (Faber £7.99). Colin Thubron trekked 600 miles round Cyprus in *Journey into Cyprus* (Penguin £6.99).

FLORIDA

Carl Hiaassen's thrillers which emphasise the violent side of Florida include *Skin Tight* (Pan £4.99) and *Double Whammy* (Pan £4.99). Harry Morgan is a tough gun-runner between Cuba and the Florida Keys in Ernest Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not* (Arrow £4.99). Elmore Leonard's Florida-based thrillers include *Stick, La Brava* and *Gold Coast* (all Penguin, £4.99), the last of which is set in Fort Lauderdale. *Exile: Cuba in the Heart of Miami* by David Rieff (Vintage £6.99) is a collection of interviews with Cubans in Miami. Thomas McGuane's *Ninety-two in the Shade* (Minerva £5.99) is the story of an unbalanced

man who wants to become a Key West fishing guide.

CARIBBEAN

Patrick Leigh Fermor's *The Traveller's Tree* (Penguin £7.99) is a journey between selected islands in the 1950s. Lucretia Stewart's *The Weather Prophet* (Vintage £6.99), describes a very different journey, made by a single woman in the 1990s. Jean Rhys' novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Penguin £5.99) takes place between Dominica and Jamaica.

CORNWALL

Vanishing Cornwall (Penguin £6.99) is Daphne du Maurier's literary and historical celebration of Cornwall. *Frenchman's*

Creek, Rebecca and Jamaica Inn (Arrow £4.99 each) are novels with Cornish locations.

LAKE DISTRICT

Dorothy Wordsworth's *Grasmere Journals* (OUP £6.99) are an account of her life with William. *A Literary Guide to the Lake District* by Grevel Lindop (Chatto £9.99), identifies places with literary associations and *The Lake District: An Anthology* compiled by Norman Nicholson (Penguin £7.99) is a superb travel companion.

SARAH ANDERSON

The author is the founder of The Travel Bookshop, 13-15 Blenheim Crescent, London W11 2EE (0171-229 5260).

Couturier of Camembert

The Camembert with its gamy scent of venison had conquered the more muffled tines of Maroilles and Limbourg... into the middle of this vigorous phrase the Parmesan threw its thin note on a country flute, while the Brie added the dull gentleness of damp tannin. Thus wrote Emile Zola on the Paris cheese shop, and little has changed today. My local cheese shop, Barthélemy, turns out to be one of the greatest in Paris - small but wildly ambitious. The soft cheeses are so ripe they almost pass out on the plate, and the hard are dignified with age.

The shop on Rue de Grenelle has old tiled floors sprinkled daily with sawdust, and marble counters covered with straw matting from which the cheese rises in piles: wobbling Reblochons, Brebis - sheep's cheese from Corsica - fishy-smelling Tomme, Coeur de Neufchatel, and Montagne de Jura. On Saturdays, a queue stretches outside the door, the 240 varieties leaving little room for customers. Even when closed on Sundays and Mondays, the scent of cheese in the cellars percolates into the street, and there are those who swear that the money from the bank next door smells of fine Roquefort.

Roland Barthélemy, the Maître Fromager, is a splendid figure in a sort of medical coat embroidered with his name. We left the pungent shop for a corner café to discuss his art. Make no mistake, it is an art. M. Barthélemy travels 5,000 km a year, visiting his suppliers in the countryside. He samples, tastes and sorts out the finest cheeses, leaving them to age to perfection before delivery to his shops in Paris and Fontainebleau.

In 25 years, he has become a couturier of cheese. Other fromagers may supply bistro

chains, but M. Barthélemy caters for the finest dinner parties on the Left Bank, as well as President Chirac, Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, and most embassies.

"I care about giving the pleasure of taste more than just running a business," says M. Barthélemy. "I have to visit the cheeses where they are made. It's the nose, the human contact, the need to see that the conditions are right."

In the cellar, he allows the soft cheeses to ripen for between one and three weeks: "There are three essentials for l'affinage [the ripening process]: temperature, humidity, and ventilation which allows the mould to grow."

Pasteurised is not in his vocabulary. Pasteurised milk means dead, bland cheese, and he prefers raw milk cheeses that have a life of their own. His staff of motherly ladies know just which cheese is at its peak and ask the exact time for eating so the cheese explodes with flavour on cue.

What would M. Barthélemy recommend for July, each cheese having its season? "Well, I would give you six cheeses perfect for tonight. I would start with a Camembert, a Roquefort, an old Gruyère de Fribourg, a half Reblochon, and two little goat's cheeses, one ripe and one dry."

For travellers, M. Barthélemy can provide the same cheeseboard, in a special sealed bag "so as not to upset your neighbours on the Eurostar", but the cheeses will be slightly less ripe so they peak on English soil.

KATE MUIR

● Barthélemy, 51 Rue de Valenciennes, 75011 Paris. Tel: 01 47 42 79 20. ● La Ferme Saint-Hubert, 21 Rue Vignon, 8th (47 42 79 20).

● The Food Lover's Guide to Paris, by Patricia Wells. Workman Publishing.

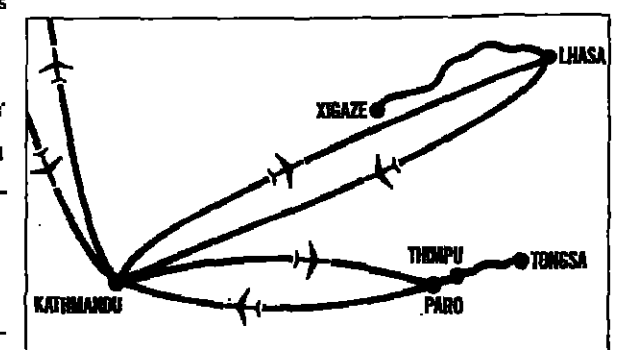
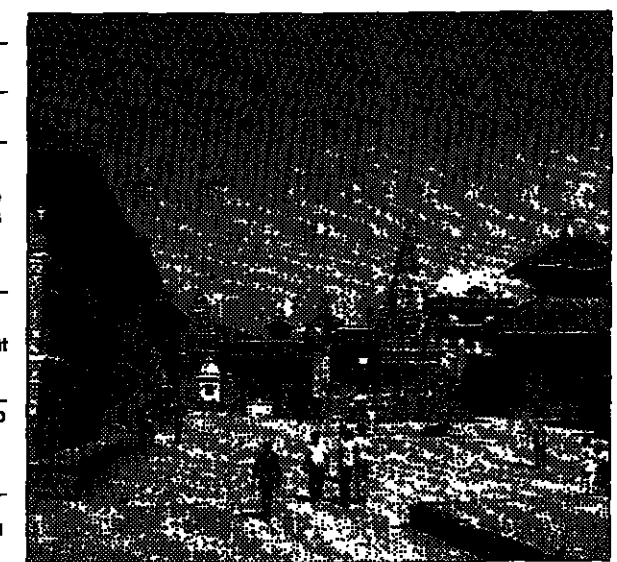
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THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 Fly London (Gatwick)-Kathmandu
DAY 2 Kathmandu Arrive mid-afternoon and stay 3 nights.
DAY 3 Kathmandu Visit the richly carved Pagoda Temples of Durbar Square, the museum with its superb 12th-14th century Nepalese bronzes and the Monastery of the Living Goddess. Also visit the great Buddhist stupa of Swayambhunath.
DAY 4 Kathmandu Drive to Patan and see Durbar Square and the Palace Complex. In the afternoon visit the great Temple of Pashupatinath, the holiest of Nepal's shrines.
DAY 5 Kathmandu-Paro Fly to Paro and stay overnight. On a clear day the flight affords breathtaking views of the great Himalayan peaks.
DAY 6 Thimphu Drive to Bhutan's capital since 1955. Here in the broad fertile valley of the Wang Chu River, visit the National Library which houses a splendid collection of ancient manuscripts and the Traditional Medicine Institute, where centuries old healing arts are still practised. Time permitting visit the Handicrafts Emporium or witness a mask and folk dance performance by the Royal Academy of Performing Arts.
DAY 7 Thimphu Visit the Tashio Dzong, Bhutan's administrative and religious centre on the banks of the river and the historic Simtokha Dzong which houses the Rigpa School for Monastic Studies.
DAY 8 Tongsa Drive through the thickly forested mountain roads to Tongsa to see the impressive Tongsa Dzong, the ancestral home of Bhutan's royal family. Stay overnight.
DAY 9 Thimphu Return to Thimphu at a leisurely pace, driving through magical countryside. Stay overnight.
DAYS 10 & 11 Paro A short drive takes us to Paro to attend various festival celebrations and visit the Rimpung (Paro) Zone, a treasure house of art and writings. There are splendid views of the whole valley. Permission will also be sought to visit the Taktsang Monastery known as 'Tigers Nest' precariously situated on the edge of a sheer cliff.
DAY 12 Paro-Kathmandu Fly to Kathmandu. Stay 2 nights.
DAY 13 Kathmandu Drive to Bhadgan and see the Golden Gate, the Five-storied Nyatapola Temple and the Palace of Fifty Five Windows.
DAY 14 Kathmandu-Lhasa Fly to Lhasa and stay 3 nights.



untouched by the modern world. Isolated, like Tibet, by its towering peaks of the Himalayas, its culture and traditions have remained constant for hundreds of years. And in Kathmandu, old and new rest side by side, the array of Hindu pagodas and Buddhist Chhatras a sculptors dream. It will be an outstanding journey of appreciation of these mountain peoples, their art and the stunning scenery they inhabit. A monumental task undertaken with a degree of comfort, although some accommodation whilst charming, will be of a simple style.

the Brahmaputra River to Kigaze. Stay 2 nights.
DAY 18 Kigaze Visit the Tashlung Monastery, one of the six great centres of Lamaism. See the Pandemonium Lama's throne in the Great Hall, the 15th century wall paintings and some fine statues. Later see the market and the Shaly Monastery founded in 1040.
DAY 19 Lhasa Drive back to Lhasa for a 2 night stay.
DAY 20 Lhasa A leisurely day visiting a market and the Drepung Monastery built in the early 1400s, once the largest and richest monastery in the world.
DAY 21 Lhasa-Kathmandu Fly to Kathmandu. Stay overnight.
DAY 22 Kathmandu-London (Gatwick) Day flight arriving in the early evening.

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Barbados: the Holders Hill season mixes sunshine with open-air performances of Shakespeare and opera

Making a drama out of a holiday

Here is a two-part quiz for opera-lovers. In Puccini's fabulous *Tosca*, in which act does a mahogany pod fall on to the stage from a great height, narrowly missing the soprano? And what contribution to the plot does the three-legged dog make?

The answer, as anyone will know who had the immense good fortune to see *Tosca* in Barbados at this year's Holders Hill season, is a) act two, although the timing was probably random, and b) none whatsoever, but he got a round of applause when he made his unscripted appearance downstage.

In the unlikely event that you need an excuse to go to Barbados — personally I can't see much wrong with stating firmly that two weeks or more on a Caribbean island is all that stands between you and insanity — the Holders season provides it. Now you can murmur that the Caribbean is frankly rather a bore, but at least Barbados has opera and Shakespeare.

Holders Hill is the island plantation home of the Kidd family, who host the festival, now in its fifth year. (Johnnie Kidd is the grandson of Lord Beaverbrook and father of superwife Jodie, to drop a couple of hugely disparate names.) After a spectacular Opera Gala opening night, the season centres on a clutch of open-air productions in the garden — this year saw three performances of *Twelfth Night* and two each of *Tosca* and *The Mikado*.

Around the fringe are sporting events such as the Carnival of Golf at the Sandy Lane and Royal Westmoreland courses, plus cricket and polo.

and cabaret shows at several of the west coast hotels.

The tone lies somewhere between Glyndebourne and a village-hall concert party; the champagne glamour of the former plus the all-hands-to-the-pump spirit of the latter. This year it lured from London the Wren Orchestra, Christopher Biggins as artistic director, Nichola McAuliffe to both act and direct, plus Dennis Quilley, Kit Hesketh-Harvey (and widow Richard Sisson), Liz Robertson, Rosie Ashe, plus the American soprano Rosemary Wagner-Scott. The chorus is recruited locally.

Up at Holders on the morning of the *Mikado* premiere, all was tropical chaos. Biggins was hobbling with gout. Richard Hanlon, the season's executive producer, collapsed on to a sofa on the verandah and doubted his sanity in having secured a concert performance by Luciano Pavarotti at Holders on Easter Saturday next year. We cheered them up by confirming that the audience had indeed spotted the angelic-looking local recruit who made his entrance as a choirboy in *Tosca* two nights earlier, perfectly clad in a crimson cassock, which he then hoisted to display dazzling white Nike trainers beneath.

Meanwhile Wendy Kidd was good-humouredly bemoaning the loss of her raffia dinner mats which had been hijacked by an opportunist props man and, sprayed shocking pink, were about to make their debut as hats in *The Mikado*; deeply tanned helpers were ferrying costumes in and out of the makeshift dressing-rooms in the stable block; green plastic chairs were being unstacked and arrayed across the emer-



The season combines beaches and musical drama, such as *The Mikado*, with Nichola McAuliffe and Stefan Bednarczyk: "It's between Glyndebourne and a village-hall concert"

ald lawns; glasses were forming ranks on tables around the edges of the natural auditorium. McAuliffe, a Holders regular, was determinedly trying to master an awkward bit of timing for her *Mikado* routine — "tum-ti-tum-ti-tum two THREE four" seemed to be the gist of it, so we told her not to worry, we would help by yelling it from the audience that night. She seemed pleased.

We left them to their chaos, and drove back to the Sandpiper Inn, and swam and lazed, showered and dined, and returned in our finery to a transformed scene.

Against a soft sky of mid-night-blue velvet sparkled

thousands of tiny lights strung in the palms above our heads. The Kidds had traded shorts and T-shirts for dinner jackets and frocks, and were graciously greeting their guests at the entrance.

The tree frogs were all but drowned out by the expectant chatter of happy people; heady tropical scents blended with Chanel and Givenchy. Unfortunately, by the time we took our seats, several glasses of champagne in the British High Commissioner's tent had dulled our normally keen sense of timing and we missed Nichola's cue, but she seemed to manage without us. Need-

less to say, it was a splendid and memorable evening.

Of course, you can go to Barbados in March or any other time and have no truck with the Holders lot: direct flights make it easy, and many regulars now use Concorde like a personal taxi service ("Darling" I heard a fellow guest call to his wife from reception at the Sandpiper Inn, "back to the beach for an hour. Concorde's been held up in the Azores!"). But why stint yourself? This way you can have a heap of cultural icing on your Caribbean cake.

SALLY BAKER

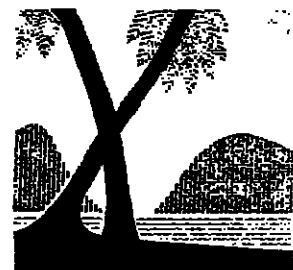
The author was a guest of the Barbados Tourism Authority

BARBADOS FACT FILE

■ The Barbados Tourism Authority, 263 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LA (0171-636 9448) and Caribbean Connection (Concorde House, Forest Street, Chester CH1 1QR, 01244 341131).

■ Caribbean Connection sponsors the Holders season: contact them for details of the 1997 programme and tickets, which range from £10 to £50. The company offers a week in March at the Sandpiper Inn from £1,425 per person, including seven nights' room-only accommodation, transfers and return British Airways flights from the UK.

■ The west coast is the place to be — best hotels, best beaches, best bars. The Sandpiper Inn is highly recommended. Also Mullins Beach Bar, St Peter (try the peach daiquiris and blackened dolphin); Hudson's Brasserie, St James (frightfully chic, fabulous food); Olive's, St James (smart, good food); the Boardwalk at the Grand Barbados resort, Carlisle Bay (peerless setting for a buffet lunch). The east (Atlantic) coast is wild and rugged, with big waves rolling on to fine pink-sand beaches: south coast has more mass-market resorts.



■ Places to visit: the lush and exotic Andromeda Botanic Garden at Bathsheba on the east coast; Gun Hill Signal Station in the central highlands, restored in 1982 and containing military memorabilia; the Sugar Museum at Portvale sugar factory at St James, and the Morgan Lewis Sugar

Mill at St Andrew; the Francis Plantation House at St George, near Gun Hill. The Barbados National Trust offers a Heritage Passport giving cut-price entry to many island sites.

■ Bridgetown has good shopping in the Broad Street area. The big stores such as Cave Shepherd and Harrisons have good duty-free offers but you must have your travel documents with you to buy. Rum is the great bargain at about £6.50 a litre, although don't expect rum punch at home to taste as good. Great T-shirts, cool sunglasses and funky music — I got street-cred by bringing my teenager back a CD of local reggae-soca band Krossfya (I was told they were called Crossfire. I naturally searched under C until redirected to K). Also bring back fiery Bajan spices and hot chilli sauces.

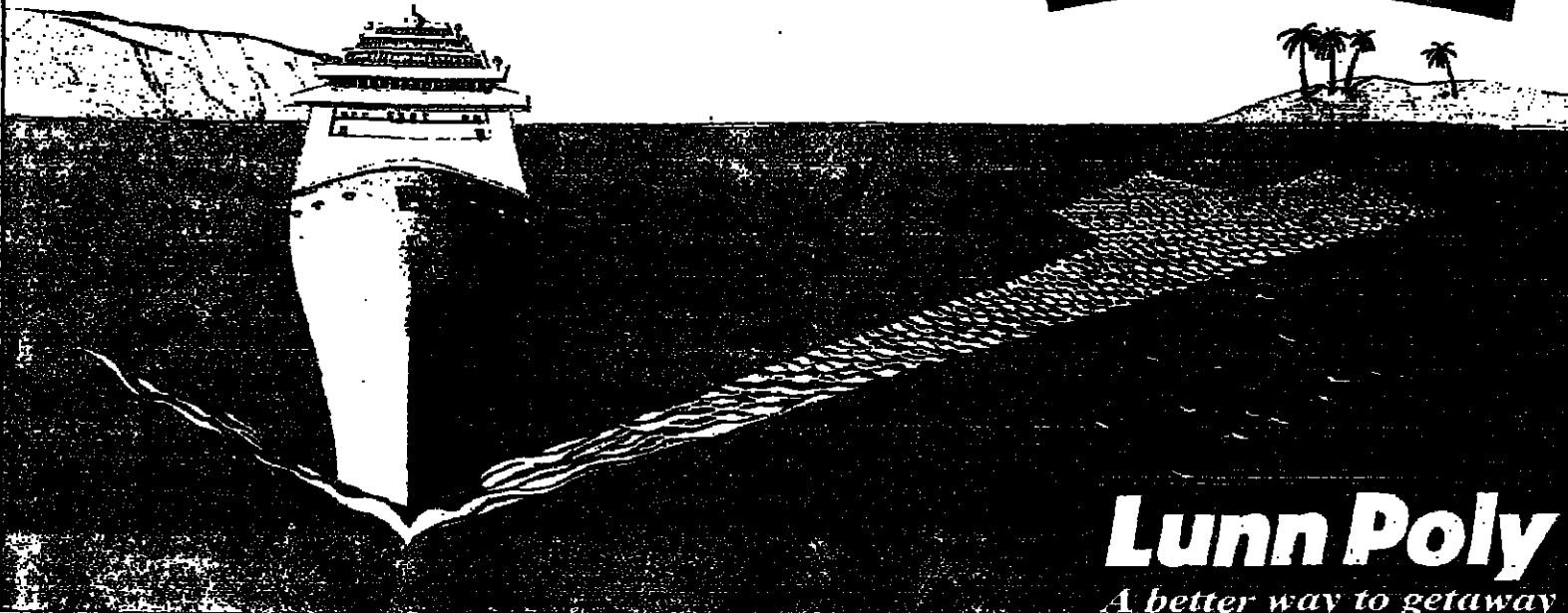
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Last-minute holidays: many delights are still on offer for those who have been too busy to organise a trip

It's never too late to take a break

EVEN THOUGH the peak holiday season is here, there's still room at the inn, auberge, hotel, and even tent. Some of the hot spots may be overflowing, but what better than to head off to Corfu, Ithaca, or Beg-Meil in southern France, Speloncato with its spectacular view of the Med from Corsica or Fuschl in the Austrian Alps? Below is a selection for those who like to leave things to the last minute.

ON THE BEACH

THERE'S Sardinia dancing on summer weekends in the little coastal villages of Caltella de la Palafrugell, Llafranc and Tamarit on the Costa Brava, by far the most picturesque and family-friendly resorts on the Spanish coast, with a hinterland of medieval hilltop villages to explore.

Spanish Harbour Holidays (0117 986077) offer apartments from £85 per property per week, sleeping up to five; fares are extra but travel can be arranged either by air or self-drive.

With much of the Algarve's coastline encased in concrete, villas in the rolling hills and villages behind the coast offer a more rural feel. The large

There are camping packages with pre-pitched tents equipped down to the last wine glass

In France there are some excellent bargains. For families on a budget, self-drive camping packages with pre-pitched tents equipped down to the last wine glass and garlic press, cost between £600-£800 for an August fortnight for up to five or six people, with return ferry fares included. KeyCamps holidays (0181-395 8505) on sites along the wide and breezy Atlantic beaches of the Vendée start at £601 for a family of two adults and up to four children, for ten nights.

Real "adventure tents" for children at £3.25 a night, pitched alongside their parents' luxurious versions, and special outdoor activities are part of French Country Campings (01923 261311) holidays under canvas at Beg-Meil in southern Brittany. Two weeks here cost £734 for two adults and up to four children, including fares.

Something more luxurious? Unusually in high season, there are still villas on the Côte d'Azur at less than jetset prices. Something Special (01992 587057) offers a choice: The Villa Pacifico near Anthéor has four bedrooms, a pool, sea views and costs £642 for two weeks each for six, including the ferry crossing. The two-bedroom Villa Seaman also has its own pool and views of the sea, and is in walking distance of Cap Benet. The price, including the crossing, is £657 per person.

MOUNTAIN HIGH

SOME of Europe's most inspiring mountain scenery can be found in Corsica, dotted with stone villages and traditional auberges, and offers delightful holidays for those who want to explore beyond the beaches. Corsican Places (01424 774366) offers the Maison Les Calanches in Speloncato, perched 2,000ft up with spectacular views of the Med; based on four sharing, the price of £579 per person for two weeks includes flights and car hire. Voyages Ilena (0171 924 4440) also have mountain houses throughout August.

Who but the most ardent beach fanatic can possibly prefer to stay in Costa del Sol resorts when there are holidays available in the Andalusian hinterland of high sierras. Near Granada, village houses cost about £150 per person to rent for two weeks (without fares) from Spain at Heart (01225 744567). If you want to experience the working life of an Andalusian



Seefeld in the Tyrol is as popular in summer as it is in winter for its healthy mountain air and walks. For ski addicts the Stubai glacier is near by

"finca" or country estate. Ilios Holidays (01403 259738) has properties with swimming pools and extensive grounds, many with horses. The fincas, sleeping from eight to 12 cost £1,800-£1,995 a week per property.

Moving across to the Italian

lakes, the reasonably priced self-catering breaks at the Lake Garda Holiday Village from Eurovillages (01606 734400) could appeal to active families. The lakeside village has football, tennis, archery and volleyball on the premises, with free lessons in

caneing and windsurfing throughout peak season — the less energetic can always slope off to nearby Verona. A week's stay for four costs £854, dropping to £650 from August 24, inclusive of ferry crossings and simple apartment accommodation (where two may

have to sleep on convertible beds in the living room). Austria's picture-book resorts are actually more popular in the summer with continental visitors who come for healthy mountain air and walks. Thomsons offer Seefeld, a dramatic train journey

away from Innsbruck, staying at the Hotel Haymon costing from £384-£432 in August with flights, transfers and half-board. Golf, fishing, tennis and aerobics are all available in this elegant resort, with skiing on the nearby Stubai glacier for addicts. Just 15

miles from Salzburg, the village of Fuschl is perched on the edge of a lake which is part of the nature reserve. A week's half-board, again with flights, at the family-owned Pension Zur Sagemühle costs from £382-£412 for a week, £478-£510 for ten days.

For something different — a holiday in Poland's Tatra mountains, where a chalet for four in Zakopane costs £380 per week (no fares), from Silesian Villas (0181-806 3755).

ON THE MOVE

ON CYCLING for Softies' (0161-248 8282) tours, holiday-makers can pedal through France in a programme designed to suit everyone. Their two-week "Gentle Tourer" costing £1,210 around the Camargue, where there are more wild horses and black bulls than people, is for cyclists who want to stop and stare — staying two nights at each hotel en route.

"Beaujolais by Bike" is an even less energetic option; a seven-night holiday costing £800, staying in a riverside hotel and visiting vineyards each day. Prices for all tours include flights, half-board, cycle hire and maps.

Slovenija Pursuits (01763 852646) combine three to six-day walking breaks among the rocky gorges and alpine meadows of the Zasavje Hills with homely farmhouse stays in the Stajerska region of Slovenia. The cost of two weeks half-board, transfers and flights is £754.

There are still holidays afloat, whether on a cruise ship or caiques, coastal steamers or crewed yachts. Norwegian Coastal Steamers are working boats that carry mail and cargo as well as holiday passengers to the little ports and fishing villages along the 1,250-mile voyage between Bergen and Kirkenes on the Russian border. The five-day Northern Mini Voyage from Scandinavian Travel Service (0171-930 8189) starts in Tromsø and costs £958 for full board and flights.

In warmer waters, Greek caiques cruising round the Cyclades, with the itinerary at the captain's discretion, costs from £914 for ten days from Argo Holidays (0171-331 7070).

JILL CRAWSHAW

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Britain: a ramble through hill country of the Home Counties and navigating the Leeds-Liverpool canal

The draw of a charmed circle

You can see it from miles off, whether you approach the area from London or Portsmouth, from the east or from the west. It isn't just a question of lifting up your eyes onto the hills — although there they are, at 900 feet, not exactly the Rockies, but a high point in southern England.

Coming from London on the A3, it's all traditional English countryside until you have passed Guildford and are near Thursley. Trim fields give way to moorland: gorse, pine, birch and bracken are everywhere. This is hill country — tough, almost desolate.

Hindhead, the hub of this area, is little more than a crossroads. It has position but no magnitude, with a hotel, a few shops and restaurants. It is the entire circle, a charmed circle, radiating five miles from these crossroads that constitutes the big draw.

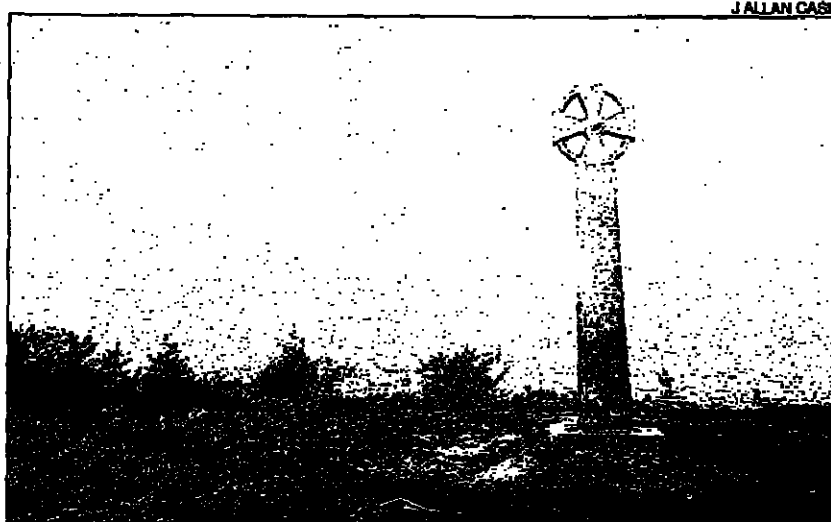
In 1822, William Cobbett, on one of his Rural Rides, described Hindhead as "the most villainous spot that God had ever made". Dickens concurred: "They walked upon the rim of the Devil's Punch Bowl and Smeke listened with greedy interest as Nicholas [Nickelby] read the inscription on the stone which, reared upon that wild spot, tells of a murder committed there... the grass on which they stood had once been dyed with gore, and the blood of the murdered man had run down, drop by drop, into the hollow which gives the place its name."

Murder had indeed been committed there in 1786. The murderers had been

caught and their bodies hung in chains on Gibbet Hill, the high point of the area. Walk there today, passing the memorial stone recording that dark deed, and you are rewarded when you reach the site of the gibbet with a staggering 360-degree view. A crowd of counties lies at your feet.

Once the railway had arrived in 1860, writers and artists could work in glorious, peaceful surroundings, then travel to town to consult with publishers or gallery owners. In 1866, Tennyson arrived — a refugee from his home on the Isle of Wight. Too many fans pressed their noses to the windows of his house there. Near Haslemere, up went his stately pile complete with spectacular views. Next came George Eliot in 1871. She rented a home not far from the poet. They met, walked and talked together. Waggoners Wells, a series of small lakes overshadowed by beech trees, was a favourite with these twin pillars of poetry and prose.

After two literary lions came three: Bernard Shaw, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and James Barrie. In the case of the first two, it was the area's health-giving element that proved the big attraction. In the 1880s, a decade before their arrival and all three at totally different stages in their careers, the district became known as "the Switzerland of England". A certain Professor Tyndall had proved scientific-



Villainous spot: the top of Gibbet Hill overlooks a spread of counties

ly that Hindhead air was of equal purity to that of the Swiss Alps. Resort hotels and pensions began to proliferate. Sanatoriums, nursing homes and schools were soon to follow.

Shaw, living in squalor in Fitzroy Square, was dragged to Hindhead by his new wife. This was not an easy time for him. He was ill. His plays were being

turned down or banned (*Mrs Warren's Profession* is set in Hindhead), and yet this is what he had to say: "This place beats any former home to fit — the air would make a dramatist of — who shall we say? I am a new man since I came here." Conan Doyle built himself a grandiose home close to Shaw's and, likewise, came for health reasons. His wife, a chronic

asthmatic, was sure to benefit from living in England's Switzerland. He penned some of his greatest stories at Hindhead and debated in public with Shaw on pacifism at the time of the Boer War.

Barrie acquired a country cottage in a pine wood at Tilford, the nearby lake being the direct inspiration for the meeting of Peter Pan, Captain Hook and attendant crocodile. His three best-known works, *The Admirable Crichton*, *Quality Street* and *Peter and Wendy* (1902-11), all date from time spent here.

Today the health-giving aspect of the area has, if anything, increased. Two of the country's best known health farms are situated here — Forest Mere and Grayshott Hall. Each capitalises on that other element of the area's attraction — spectacular scenery. Both, in any case, have their own beautiful grounds.

Primarily, this is walking country: it's an area to amble and ramble through. To scale heights and reward yourself with grand views, Gibbet Hill, the Devil's Jumps and Blackdown must be on your walking agenda. Yet for sheer beauty, Waggoners Wells, Fresham Pond, Nutcombe Valley, Ludshott and Hindhead Commons, quite apart from plunging the depths of the Punch Bowl, are equally unmissable: everywhere, sandy footpaths will take you through a

land of pine, beech, bracken and heather. There are no fields.

Next week, in Haslemere, there's the music festival; it specialises in 16th-18th century music played on authentic instruments of the time. Above all, don't fail to visit villages such as Tilford, Lurgashall, Chiddingfold and Thursley when in search of good pubs in idyllic settings.

The excellent museum in Haslemere's High Street is a mine of information on beauty spots and who-lived-where. The majority of authors' homes still stand: Tennyson's and Eliot's are in private hands, Shaw's is a school, Conan Doyle's at Hindhead is a restaurant called Undershaw.

Apart from the literati, a motley collection of other big names either lived in or were lured into this same charmed circle: Lloyd George, Lutyens, Marie Stopes, Bertrand Russell and the Webbs. Today, thanks to the National Trust purchasing great swathes of it, the area has largely survived. It is still easy to be lured.

MICHAEL NYMAN

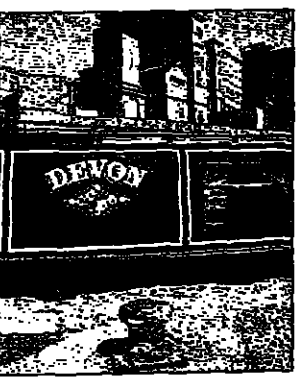
● Where to stay: Lythe Hill Hotel, Penwood Road, Haslemere (01428 651251). Weekend rate: £59 pp per night half-board. The Georgian Hotel, High Street, Haslemere (01428 651555). One night £49, two nights £50 based on two people sharing, half-board. ● Health farms: Forest Mere Hydro, Liphook, Hampshire (01428 723251). Grayshott Hall, Headley Road, Grayshott, Nr Hindhead (01428 604331). ● Haslemere Music Festival: July 18-21 (01428 642161).

On board the slow boat to Bingley

The urgent rumble of heavy traffic, half a mile away on the Aire valley expressway, ruffles the tranquillity of our canal. Two centuries ago, this was becoming the great trade artery between Leeds and Liverpool, a conduit across the Pennines for the Industrial Revolution and a monument to the skill and fortitude of the early navigators, as navvies were properly known. Over-taken long ago by less tranquil forms of transport, the waterway is bequeathed to mallard and moorhen, swan and heron and the growing number of boating enthusiasts who enjoy pottering along its length and relishing its history.

For canals have become a world within a world, separated from everyday pressures by their unwinding calm and a speed limit of four miles an hour. They are maintained these days for leisure rather than commerce. There are more than 25,000 pleasure boats on the network and each year 250,000 people take canal holidays.

British Waterways spends more than £90 million on repairing, restoring and maintaining the system. Some bridges have been converted to push-button operation but gravity, leverage and the power of water to float heavy objects remain the forces that make canals tick. The system



Passing through Bingley

FACT FILE

■ Drifters offers up to 5,000 canal holidays around the country (0345 626252). The narrowboat was a four-berth Duchess class costing between £550 and £940 per week depending on season.

■ For information about canals, including hiring boats, contact British Waterways Customer Services, Willow Grange, Church Road, Watford WD1 3QA (01923 226422).

■ Silsden Boats, Canal Wharf, Silsden, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 0DE (01535 653675).

of locks on the 127 miles between Leeds and Liverpool lift and lower barges and their cargo through the height of St Paul's Cathedral.

Richard Bradburn, a former architect who now runs the boat yard at Silsden near Keighley, West Yorkshire, manoeuvres the 60ft narrowboat away from his canal wharf and hands over the helm before jumping ashore. "Remember, it turns on its middle," he says, and off we chug between a sprawl of new houses with gardens lapped by the canal.

Narrowboats are made of steel, weigh 16 tons and have no brakes, but the most inept skipper will quickly learn to steer this potential battering ram and control its speed by judicious use of reverse gear. Below decks our narrowboat is extremely comfortable, with a twin-berth cabin aft, then moving along its pencil length there is a bathroom with shower and toilet, a double-berth cabin, kitchen and dining area and then, immediate-

ly forward, a saloon with armchairs. Central heating is so efficient that canal cruising in mid-winter would not be out of the question and would have a charm of its own.

We potter eastwards where the waterway winds between meadows and along the edge of a hill with a view down into Aire Dale. Cyclists on the tow-path and joggers overtake us, a man walking his dog wishes us a pleasant voyage. Beneath trees that border the canal's edge there is a haze of bluebells and the scent of wild garlic. Swans and mallard usher flocks of young to the protection of the bank as we pass and this idyll continues for a couple of hours until the Micklethwaite swing bridge. Frances, my wife, hops ashore, unlocks the control panel, brings down the traffic barriers and presses the buttons that swing the bridge to one side. By the time our boat and two rafts of handicapped children have manoeuvred their way through, cars piled up on both sides of the canal.

When the barriers lift and the bridge has slotted back into position a delayed and enraged motorist winds down his window and snarls "bastards" at her before taking off with a screech of tyres; clearly a man needing the therapeutic calm of a canal holiday.

Bingley hoves on the horizon with the waterway equivalent of Cape Horn: the "staircase" of five locks followed swiftly by a three-rise series that drops canal traffic onto the valley floor. This impressive feature was built in 1774 and has hardly changed, a sturdy construction of stone walls and robust gates that hold back the water as levels are altered by opening and closing sluices. One lock holds enough, we are told, to provide a bath a day for ten years.

A resident lock-keeper helps us down the flight of five locks then hops on a bicycle to reach the three-rise system ahead of us. The locks have the same tidy, spick-and-span appear-

ance I always associate with lighthouses, clearly maintained by enthusiasts.

The pleasant mill town gave its name to a leading building society and for its pains received the father of all architectural carbuncles in return, a prominent building quite out of scale and out of style with its surroundings and now hung with plastic foliage. The physician can bury his mistakes, wrote Frank Lloyd Wright, but the architect can only advise his client to plant vines. He must have visited Bingley.

From Bingley one of the most pleasant canal stretches to be found anywhere wanders through woodland, crosses the River Aire on an aqueduct and runs alongside mill buildings being put to new use.

At Saltale the Victorian mill owner Sir Titus Salt turned a Utopian dream into a grand reality and built a model village for his workers. The cottages and stone steps remain but his mill is now an extraordinary centre for craftwork and painting, in-

cluding many works by David Hockney, a local lad.

Two days on the canal end with an abandoned attempt to turn a 60ft boat in a 50ft wide waterway and an hour of wild reversing. But appetites are whetted, some 3,000 more miles of waterway and navigable rivers in Britain remain to be explored and next time we will allow more than a couple of days. Haste and canal travel are incompatible partners.

RONALD FAUX

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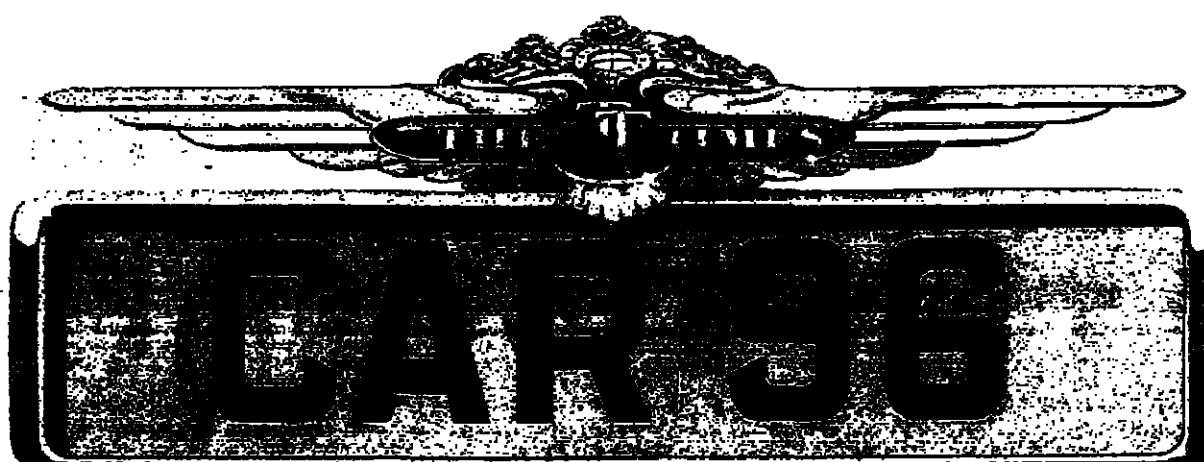
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Woman driver's novel offer for F1 fans

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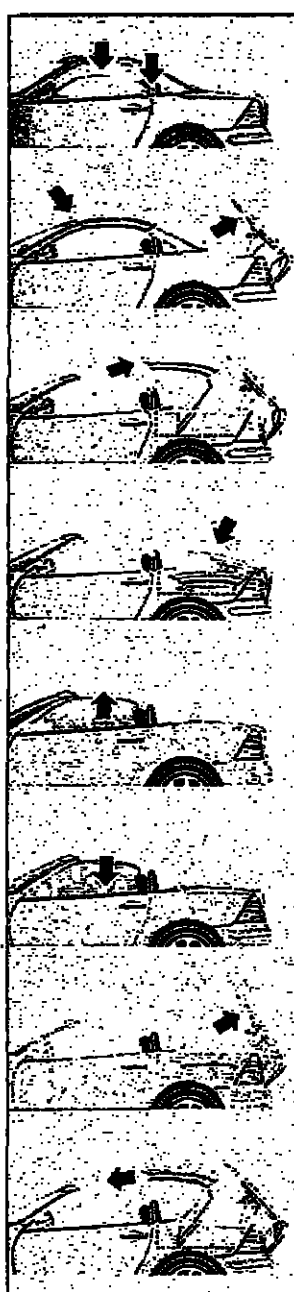
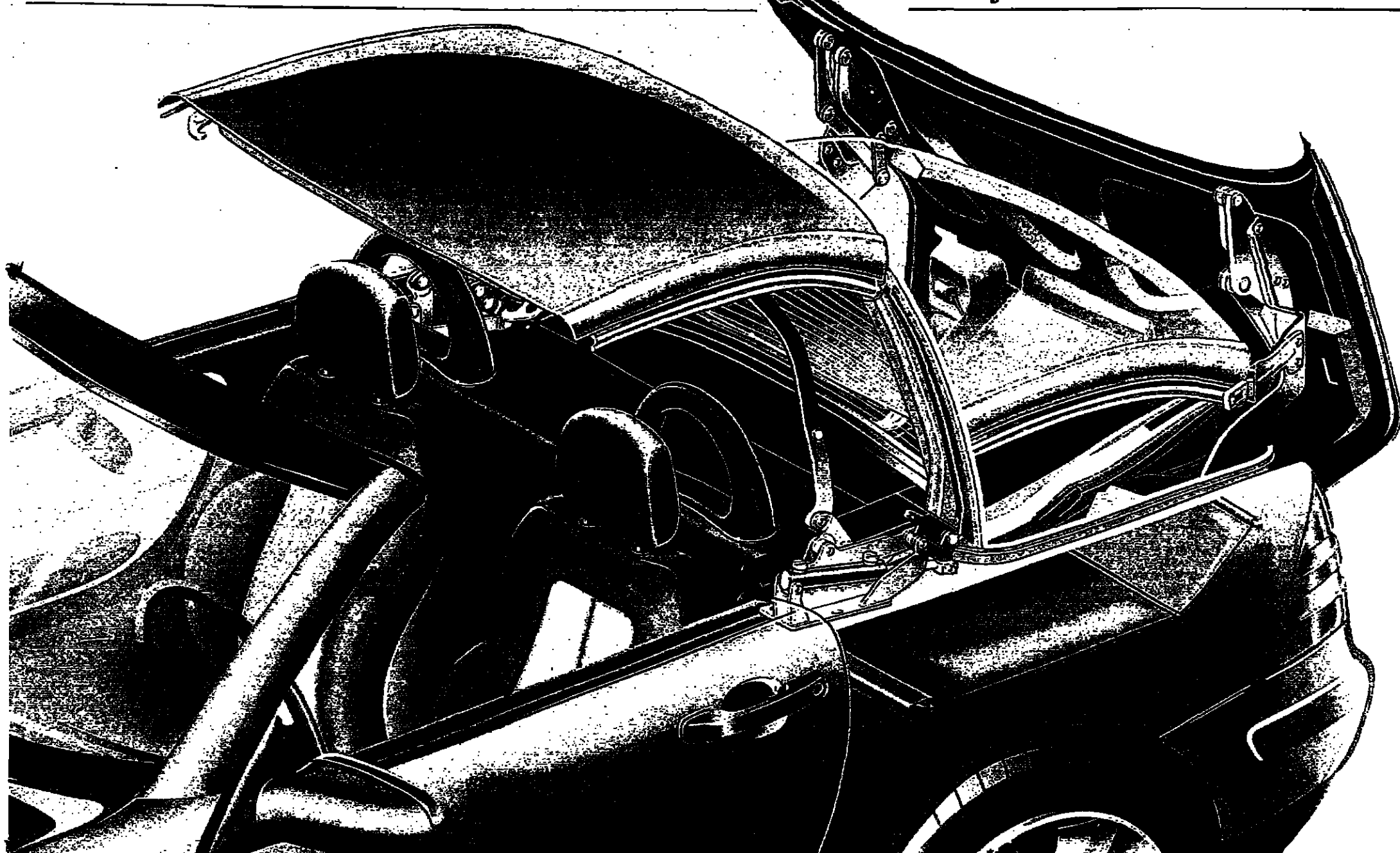
Why Cuban wheels are now the height of fashion

Page 5



SATURDAY JULY 13 1996

Kevin Eason on a sunshine kid from a sensible family: the Mercedes self-converting convertible



Besides the ability to cram its roof into a space above its boot (see above right), the SLK features a "retro-look" interior designed to appeal to younger buyers who have traditionally regarded Mercedes as transport for the middle-aged

Hardtop one minute, topless the next

If there was an Olympic prize for gawping, the young Italian with the baggy T-shirt and half-mast shorts would have been a clear gold medal contender. Admittedly he was looking at a sleek little coupé which, 25 seconds later, had turned itself into a convertible.

A push of a button and the new Mercedes SLK dismantled its steel roof like an arthritic crab throwing off its shell, each section folding neatly into a gaping maw above the boot.

It was a performance of simplicity and elegance, and the gormless youth was left to wonder how he was going to afford the sports car that left him so gobsmacked. The good news is, he has plenty of time to save up because the SLK is sold out for the best part of two years. And no wonder.

This is the car that is going to fulfil all the promises made by Mercedes during the past couple of years. When the Germans showed their first concept versions, enthusiasts were tripping over their chequebooks to get at the glamorous roadster.

But the fear is always that the courageous styling of the concept will be diluted into the feeble blandness of the Euro-car when it finally arrives in the showrooms.

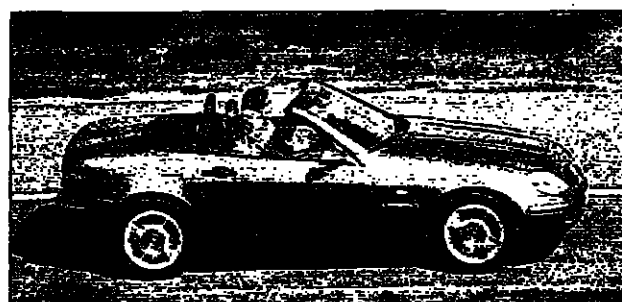
True, the SLK is not as dramatic as its concept version. But it is a contender for the title of most desirable car

of the year, with competition to come from the Lotus Elise and Porsche's little Boxster. The SLK is not only pretty, though, not only performs like a blast of fresh air, but has a series of clever innovations which traditionally would not get within a stringback glove's length of a small sports car.

Like that tin roof. Sports cars come in two types: coupé or soft-top. Recent years have seen big advances in electronic systems which pull back canvas roofs and fold them behind the front seats. There are even separate hard tops, but you have to load them into place and fasten them down, a job for extremely patient owners with gym-toned muscles. But the SLK was designed from the outset as a coupé with a hard top which would fold away.

"We never thought of it any other way," says Herr Jürgen Hubbert, the head of Mercedes' car division. "When you are driving at speed on a motorway, maybe you want a hard top and air conditioning. But you want the top down on a sunny summer's day on country roads."

The result is a coupé which offers the benefits of a solid roof (quieter running at speed, plus extra security) with the romance of a convertible. There is always the nagging doubt that one day the electrical sliding system will fail at the precise moment that the heavens open and the roof



Fun to drive: the baby roadster with its lid packed away

refuses to budge. In fact, the roof on my test car jammed temporarily halfway into its storage space at the top of the boot because my bulky baggage would not fit into the much-reduced luggage compartment, but Mercedes says test roofs were activated 20,000 times to ensure reliability — the equivalent of opening the roof six times a day for ten years.

Most car makers would be put off a hard top with a mechanical sliding system because of the substantial weight penalty. But by using new materials such as magnesium for the first time, Mercedes engineers have kept the SLK down to 1,270 kilograms (about 2,700lb). That is still 200 kilos heavier than an MGF for a car which is only fractionally longer and wider.

The question is whether the extra weight hampers performance. The answer, happily, is that this baby Benz is a

cracker. First deliveries to the UK later this year will be of the SLK 23 Kompressor, the 2.3-litre supercharged four-cylinder version, with automatic box only.

Purists, particularly those waiting for the six-cylinder Boxster, might argue against Mercedes' choice of just four pots under the bonnet, but supercharging is a wonderful solution to dragging 193 brake horsepower smoothly from a small engine.

Power is available immediately from the bottom of the rev counter — no lag as in a turbocharged car — and right through the range, so that twisting and turning through tight bends is easy: squeeze the throttle and the SLK responds immediately. There is a manual transmission, although Mercedes is notorious for its ponderous boxes, apparently designed more for durability than

shiftability. But the five-speed was reasonably easy to use.

The electronically-controlled automatic cuts acceleration times and has just as much driver flexibility. Expect a 0 to 62mph (100kph) time of 7.6 seconds and a top speed of 144mph from the automatic, plenty quick enough for any enthusiastic driver, although the car is at its best in mid-range, accelerating rapidly for safe overtaking and snaking around rural roads in second and third gears.

That is when the Mercedes chassis proves itself. Even with the top off, it feels as rigid and stable as a saloon. Putting the lid back on must also have a softening effect that other sports cars cannot match. Pushing the car hard on bumpy, tough roads, the handling was perfectly predictable, the nose pointing into the corners with only a hint of oversteer in even the swiftest of bends.

The car will clearly find its usual market among the rich blue-rinse and twinset crowd, particularly in the United States where cars such as this are trophy acquisitions. They will love all the usual stuff which makes a Mercedes a Mercedes, such as twin airbags (including a system which senses when a baby seat is fixed to the passenger side and reduces the force from the bag, or prevents the bag going off if a rear-facing seat is attached), the remarkable feel-

ing of solidity and the fantastic build quality. But this is a Benz for boys and girls. In fact, it is even fun. The normally glum chaps at Mercedes have let their hair down with "retro-look" interiors with two-tone seats and black numbers on white dials on the dashboard, reminiscent of those almost art deco fascias of the original SLs that still look as much sculpture as machine.

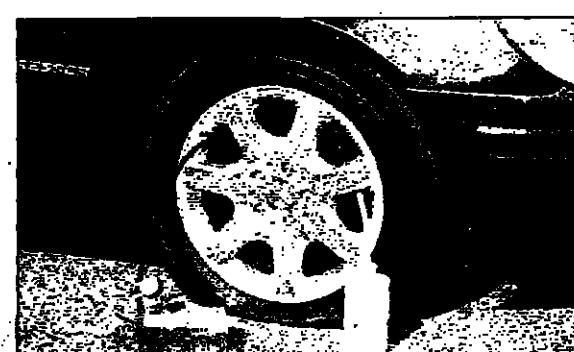
Hubbert reckons that the SLK, with a price tag of around £30,000 in the UK for the 2.3, will drag down the average age of Mercedes customers — traditionally middle-aged-middle-class professionals and the seriously rich — by attracting thirty-somethings. The SLK is the first in a line of cars designed to appeal to younger buyers who might aspire to owning a car with that famous three-pointed star on the bonnet, but previously assumed they would have to wait for their pension book to afford one.

After the SLK comes the V-class people-mover, then the American-built M-class 4x4 and A-class mini, plus the Smart car — the tiny city model being built as a joint venture with Swatch.

"These cars will change the perceptions of Mercedes," says Hubbert. "They will be cheaper and more accessible, but with the virtues of Mercedes."

So the gormless Italian can start saving now. Maybe that SLK is not so far away.

SHRINKING THE SPARE TYRE



Mercedes' kit uses latex liquid and a compressor

Mercedes has banished that sinking feeling. The SLK is not fitted with a spare wheel, except in the UK where regulations demand one, because drivers can simply pump up a puncture with a bottle of milky white liquid.

In a car as small as the SLK, the engineering challenge was to eliminate as much unnecessary weight as possible and to create the largest boot capacity in a tight space. The answer was to throw out the spare wheel, which is bulky, takes up valuable room and weighs up to 44lbs.

Instead, SLK owners squeeze a latex agent through the tyre valve and then use a small air compressor, powered from the cigar lighter, to re-inflate the tyre before driving off at a maximum 50mph. The tyre should last around 600 miles before it needs to be replaced, although the latex won't fix the worst bursts when owners will need to contact the Mercedes 24-hour helpline.

In Britain though, there will be a new collapsible spare — a lightweight wheel with specially flattened rubber — which is inflated with the small compressor. As it fills, the tyre unfolds to the same full size: however the collapsible spare is 30 per cent lighter than the 15-inch front wheels and 16-inch rears that would usually have to be lugged out by the driver after a flat.

They last longer because they're built more slowly.



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AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● London Westminster Bridge closed from 9pm Friday until 5am Monday for reconstruction work, use Lambeth as an alternative.

● A4020 Southall; lane closures with temporary lights on Uxbridge Road between Windmill Lane and Greenford Road near the Iron Bridge for improvements.

● A30 Ashford; improvement work on London Road at the junction with Stanwell Road and Town Lane with lane closures at times.

● A503 Tottenham; restrictions on Ferry Lane for major reconstruction of the River Lea bridge at Mill Road with temporary lights controlling traffic.

● A40 Hillingdon; bridge work at Hillingdon Circus on the west-bound entry and east-bound exit slip roads with traffic down to a single lane through a contraflow.

● South-East B3028 Bray Upper Bray Road is closed for bridge repairs.

● M4 junctions 12-14; overnight lane closures from 10pm until 6am between Theale and Hungerford for roadworks, which will take the motorway down to a single lane at times.

● A413 Wendover; restrictions as work continues on bypass.

● A420 Cumnor Hill; lane closures in both directions with a 40mph speed restriction.

● M20 around junction 8 (Hollington); one lane closed.

● B2205 Herne Bay; diversions around the Canterbury Road with temporary lights controlling traffic.

● M25 junctions 6-10; major widening work between Godstone and Reigate with a 50mph speed restriction.

● South-West M5 junctions 17-20; lane restrictions both ways between Bristol West and Clevedon, especially over Avonmouth Bridge with a 50mph speed restriction.

● A347 Bournemouth; roadworks on New Road across Ensbury bridge with temporary lights.

lights. Wide vehicles being diverted.

● A38 Gloucester; major roadworks at Cole Avenue roundabout.

● A38 West Huntspill; temporary lights on Bleak bridge for work.

● A3102 Swindon; major roadworks at Mannington roundabout with traffic down to a single lane. Long delays.

● Midlands and East Anglia A617 Temple Normanton; roadworks with contraflow between Chesterfield and the M1, with diversion around Hassock Lane bridge.

● A4108 Broadmore Green; temporary lights.

● A50 Glenfield; lane closures on Gorbey Road between the A46 and County Hall Island.

● A6 Lockington; contraflow with a single lane both ways between Warren Lane and Netherfield Lane.

● A1077 Winterton; restrictions on Roxby Road between Theaby Lane and Roxby.

● A604 Haverhill; traffic down to a single lane at Stumer.

● A4123 Oldbury; off-peak lane closures on Newbury Road at Birchfield Island and on Pound Road at Bleakhouse Road.

● North A167M Newcastle; central motorway is down to a single lane northbound for work between the New Bridge Street roundabout and north of Leamond Road.

● M6 junctions 21-21a; roadworks and contraflow with three narrow lanes in both directions between Thelwell and Croft.

● M8 junctions 30-32; lane closures in both directions (Monday-Friday) between the Blacow and Broughton junctions.

● M1 junction 47; major roadworks with lane closures and a 30mph speed restriction.

● M62 junction 28; lane restrictions and a 30mph speed restriction at junction of A650 and A653 just next to the Tingley junction.

● M18 junctions 1 to M1; contraflow in operation between Rotherham and Thurncroft for resurfacing work. Expect long peak-time delays.

● Scotland A90 Aberdeen; restrictions at the roundabouts on either side of the bridge of Dee.

● M8 junction 15; westbound traffic restricted at Townhead to three narrow lanes with slip-road closures.

● A90 Longforgan; lane closures in both directions for roadworks.

● A725 East Kilbride Expressway; total closure of westbound off ramp to Main Street, Blantyre with diversions operating via the slip road to Hamilton.

● A737 between Beith and Howwood. Roadworks with temporary lights controlling traffic.

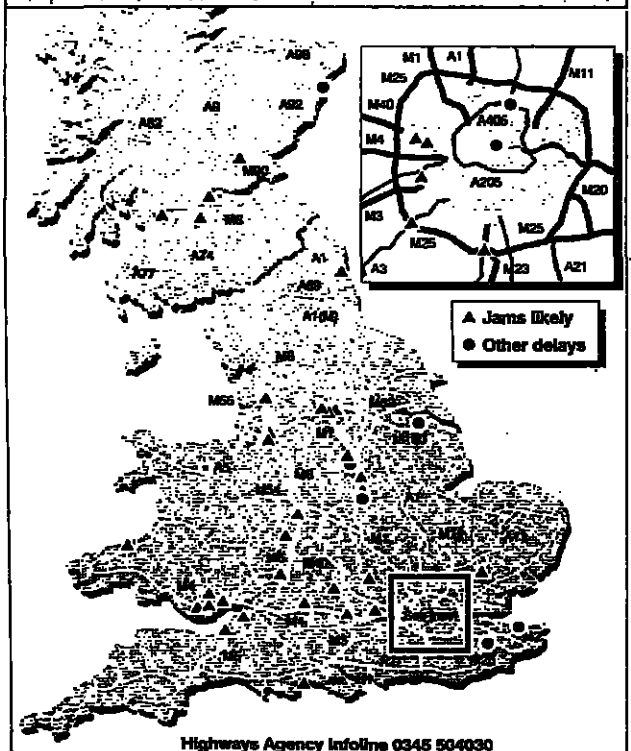
● Northern Ireland B101 Lisburn; temporary lights on Pond Park between Portulla Drive and Pond Park Avenue.

● A3 Portadown; restrictions on the Northway at junction with Mill Avenue.

● A21 Comber; restrictions on Hillsborough Road.

● A5 Milltown; lane closures on Strabane Road with temporary lights controlling traffic between Sion Mills and Newtonstewart.

MAJOR ROADWORKS



Highways Agency helpline 0345 504030

Rescue organisations don't discriminate by giving women priority — and pity the man who argues that they do

Breakdown of common sense

The roads of Britain are mostly populated with sane people doing their best. Unfortunately there are a few men out there — a tiny but lethal minority — who prey on women.

This fact was recognised by the motoring organisations and the police several years ago. A lone woman whose car breaks down will be given priority treatment when she telephones for help. The obvious reason is that although 99.9 per cent of women will never have cause for alarm, a small number have been assaulted, raped and murdered by men while waiting to be rescued.

Therefore all women feel vulnerable in such a situation and nearly all men, given that we have wives, daughters, mothers, partners, female friends, will favour a system that minimises the risk, which the rescue priority system does. No man other than a complete imbecile would object to waiting, say, ten minutes longer so that a woman whose car had broken down could be attended to first.

Yet the Equal Opportunities Com-

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

mission has written to Britannia Rescue about a leaflet in which Britannia said it would give priority to vulnerable women. The EOC says that this is unfair and even illegal. The Sex Discrimination Act makes it unlawful to offer one sex a better service than the other.

Now I am not opposed to the EOC nor am I opposed to the Sex Discrimination Act. But no law is working properly if it fails to give most protection to those most in



need. If we start to believe otherwise then we are heading down the road to madness. We will end up believing that the Children Act unfairly discriminates in favour of children and against paedophiles.

There is no question that breakdown organisations offering a special service for women are seeking a commercial advantage. But in this case common sense also makes common sense.

According to a spokeswoman for

the EOC: "A man could sue if he could prove he had suffered from this policy". And which man might that be? Fred West is dead. The Yorkshire Ripper is behind bars.

A fascinating scenario presents itself. A man breaks down on the M1 and telephones for assistance. While he is waiting, a woman pulls on to the hard shoulder. She also calls the same breakdown organisation.

A rescue truck arrives and deals with the woman first. The man is

infuriated by this and decides to sue the rescue firm. If he can prove that he called for help before the woman did, he will almost certainly win.

Or rather, he will think he has won. He will not think so for long. By the time the television news and the newspapers have finished with the case, he will want to emigrate, or jump off a tower block.

Society has its own way of dealing with people who offend against common decency and this man will discover that society's punishment is more severe than anything ever dreamed up by old men in wigs.

The usual reaction to cases such as that involving the EOC and Britannia is for someone to rush off and amend the relevant legislation. This urge should be resisted. Britannia, and other organisations offering this valuable service to women, should also resist the temptation to withdraw their advertising.

Instead, we should all remain calm and await the first male driver to sue. Hopefully the case will be heard in one of our bigger courts: the Law Courts in The Strand would be handy as this can accommodate a large number of reporters.

And, without wishing any ill-will towards Britannia Rescue, I hope that they are the ones this meathead sues. I quote the dictionary: "Britannia, personification of Britain, usually as woman with shield, helmet and trident". That's my girl.

Ghost car's £4,000 fines

David Corn's prewar saloon has an illegal doppelganger, says Vaughan Freeman

The last time David Corn's 1935 Standard 10 saloon was out on the open road, England was winning the World Cup and Harold Wilson was Prime Minister. Yet despite not having turned a wheel since the summer of 1966, the immobile classic has racked up more than £4,000 worth of parking fines in the past year.

Most weeks for the past 12 months, the post has brought bundles of parking tickets to David's door, sometimes six at a time. Scores of fines have arrived over the months demanding payment for fines supposedly incurred by his little prewar saloon.

According to the powers that be and their computers, the car, which has been in storage at David's home at Shavington in Cheshire has apparently been living a ghostly double life, slipping out of its garage and completing, unnoticed, the 400-mile round-trip to London to taunt



David Corn and his Standard 10: either the car has been sneaking off or someone has pirated the registration plate

the traffic wardens and meter maids throughout the borough of Westminster.

In an effort to stem the tide of fines and paperwork, David has been forced to hire a solicitor and now faces a legal bill of between £200 and £300. He has been asked to pay a total of £4,320 in fines and received demands for him to appear in magistrates court. He has also been summoned to Cardiff Crown Court and at one point was only seven days from having bailiffs visit to collect the fines in kind.

David, aged 56, who runs a haulage business, says, "It all started early last year when the first fines started arriving, and it has been ongoing since then. I have had six parking tickets all arrive in the same post, then you get a bit of a gap, then a load more arrive."

"When they first started I wasn't too bothered. I realised there was something wrong when they kept on coming. I took them to the police at Crewe and explained everything to them and they were very obliging and rang Westminster council to explain everything, but they took no notice at all."

"I had to engage the services of a solicitor. But still the fines kept coming, starting at £50 going on to £90 if you didn't pay within 28 days. In the end, I was having summonses from Cardiff Crown Court. My solicitor sent the summonses back explaining the situation and we thought that was the end of it."

"But ten days later the summonses were returned with a letter saying that my reason for non-payment was not accepted by the court and that if I didn't pay up within seven days the bailiffs would be sent round. The car hasn't been on the road since 1966. That number, CLG 298, has been registered with the car since it was built in 1935."

Cheshire county council originally issued the registration and it still belongs to the Standard, according to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea. David inherited the car from his father, who had bought it second-hand in the mid-1950s. He has fond memories of going for his first ever drive in the Standard 10 as a 17-year-old and later of going courting in it.

"I have got all the paperwork for the car and it is all in order, but clearly somebody has been using my number illegally and switching it from car to car because the parking tickets have referred to the number as being on different makes, including Vauxhall, Citroën, Peugeot, Opel, and unknown makes which might be left cars."

What puzzles David is how such a distinctive registration, attached to cars built around 1935, did not raise the curiosity of traffic wardens or police when placed, as it must have been, on cars clearly built much later. David says: "I put that point to the police up here in Crewe, but when they asked about that in London they got the message that the police down there are too busy to go chasing parking fines."

"The cars involved using my number could have been on a drug run or moving stolen property, or the cars it was on might have been stolen. It seems very strange, uncanny, that of all the numbers they could have thought up to use, they came up with mine."

The Standard 10 is in good condition, having been restored, but has not turned a wheel for three decades, says David. "It was last on the road in the summer of 1966 and has been stored ever since. My father bought it about 1953 or 1954 and it was passed over to me when he died in 1991. I haven't seen a version of this model on the road for some years now."

David believes the car is worth between £7,500 and £8,000 but is not thinking about selling. "It is my ambition to get it running again," he says. "It has been restored once and is kept under cover and doesn't have any rust on it. It is worth more to me than the money. I was driving on my 17th birthday with a provisional licence and this was the first car I drove — that was in 1957 — and I grew up with it and have happy memories of courting days in it."

The parking-fine fiasco has done little to dim David's memories or enthusiasm for the little car, and he has finally won his battle to convince Westminster council that his car is not a flagrant rule-abuser. The council has now agreed not to press for payment for the pile of parking tickets that has caused David so much upset and expense.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Million-miler

One of BMW's cars is just back from a million-mile test. The 1990 325i has been running non-stop for four years to test oil for Mobil. Plugs, filters and coolant were changed every 30,000 miles and the oxygen sensor and drive belt after 60,000 miles while the catalytic converter managed 200,000 miles.

Lost propriety

Sleeping babies, poisonous snakes and nude photographs have all been left by forgotten drivers dropping off rented cars, according to Budget Rent a Car. Other finds include false legs, false arms, a glass eye and a bale of hay.

Fast sellers

Former Formula One stars Mario and Michael Andretti have bought their first car dealership. The duo have acquired a Toyota showroom on the outskirts of Pittsburgh and are planning to expand.

Belt and braces

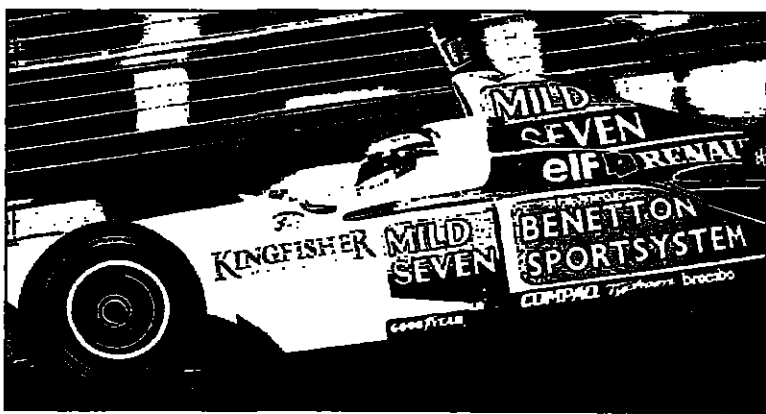
Thousands of motorists will spend part of their holiday at the roadside because of snapped car belts, warns the RAC, which had 37,000 calls last year to replace car belts. It says drivers should check their cars before they set off on what will be for many the longest journeys of the year.

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☐ 1) 15-24 ☐ 2) 25-34 ☐ 3) 35-44 ☐ 4) 45-54 ☐ 5) 55-64 ☐ 6) 65+

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (4-6 copies) during the week?

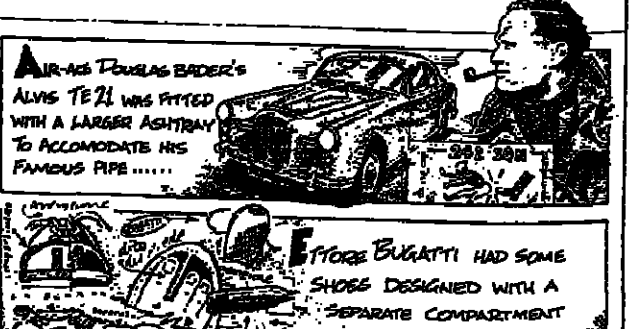
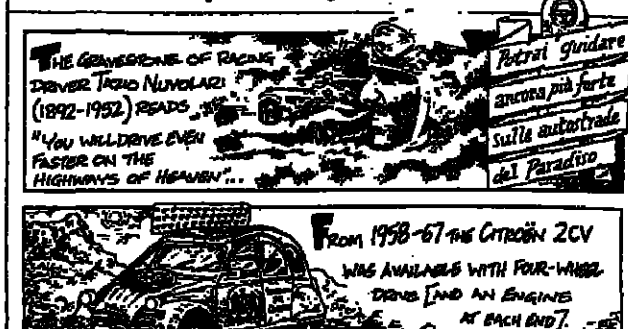
Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy occasionally (3 copies or less) during the week?

Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (2-4 copies a month)?

If you do not wish to receive mailings of offers or services from The Times or companies carefully selected by Times Newspapers Limited please tick this box ☐

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AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Evans



For less than £10,000 you can be a contender on yesteryear's top-flight grid, Vaughan Freeman reports

If you don't have the eyes of a hawk, the reactions of Linford Christie and a spare £20 million a year to go Formula One racing, you can always try historic racing in cars that sell for well below £10,000 and in events that cost only £100 each time to enter.

The events are based on the star cars of yesteryear, incredible looking machines once at the forefront of motorsport technology. A few years on such cars are much cheaper, but not much slower, and are raced by enthusiastic amateurs.

The classified pages of motorsport magazines are filled with adverts for such cars — such as the 1957 T43 Formula Two Cooper Climax raced by Sir Jack Brabham and Bruce McLaren, on sale for £49,500 from Chris Alford, the historic racing car specialist of West Sussex.

For those with shallower pockets, Alford is also selling, for just under £14,000, a 1971 Formula Ford car, the Eldon Mk3 driven by Indianapolis winner Danny Sullivan. Prices can start well below £10,000, says Chris, in a world where £350 buys a weekend of competitive, budget-priced racing.

"Historic Formula Ford cars in particular are reasonably easy to buy, very easy to maintain, and very reasonably priced. You can buy a running one for £8,500, and a race-winning one for £15,000.

At the extremes of historic racing, you can buy and race a scruffy MG for around a couple of thousand pounds, or spend £250,000 on an ex-Jackie Stewart Formula One historic Tyrrell, or race Lotus Elites, Jaguar E-Types and Ford Anglias."

For the price of a used Cavalier, would-be racers can get behind the wheel of a piece of motoring history and compete in events that are full-blooded racing but without the crash, bang, wallop that bends cars and disfigures modern motorsport.

Alford says: "It's not 'after you, Claude' racing. We all know we're not going to be the world champion tomorrow and that, even if I win 20 historic races in a year, Frank Williams is not going to want to sign me up."

"The races are very hard but fair and you get none of the pushing and shoving that has turned British Touring Car racing into dogfights and which you even get in modern Formula One racing, where they don't seem to bother too much if they go into each other."

"I come from an age when they didn't do that. When I started racing in the Sixties, if you drove into somebody you would go up to them after the race and apologise. You also didn't do it because there was a high likelihood of hurting yourself."

"In historic events you can have wonderful races and be driving within a fag packet's width of someone, but it is that fag packet that makes the difference."

If the racing is not enough of a draw, then the social life certainly is, adds Chris: "At the end of the day, it is a great deal of fun. We race at all the famous British circuits, Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Snetterton, Mallory Park, as well as abroad, and many racers have motorhomes."

"The guys who tend to do it are in their mid-40s and 50s, successful businessmen with companies to run on Monday morning. I have raced

since I was 18 and at the beginning of the year would buy a car and then sell it at the end of the season. I found almost by accident that I could make a living buying and selling historic racing cars."

Among the cars Don Wood has for sale at his Bournemouth Airport headquarters is a 500bhp three-litre Ford Cosworth March 811 from 1980-81, which, with the right gearing, will touch 190mph at Silverstone. Other cars available include Jonathan Palmer's old Tyrrell, a Patrese-driven Arrow from 1981 and a Minardi.

Just as in modern racing however, those in Historic Formula One breathe a more rarefied atmosphere where cars start at around £100,000, and can cost £500,000 and more. Back-up usually includes an articulated transporter, plus two or three engineers in the pit lane who will usually have been doing the same job when the car was in its F1 heyday.

Wood, who won the 1988 Historic Formula One championship in an Arrows, says: "Historic Formula One racing is a growing sport in the UK, and it is also increasingly popular in America. There are two distinct types of racers. You have those who enjoy the preservation and restoration of cars that represented, at a particular period, the peak of automotive design and technology, and which have a history, such as the car that Lauda won Monaco in. These people enjoy owning their car in the same way that they might enjoy owning a Rembrandt or a Picasso — with the difference that they can take it out and race it. For them it is also a long-term investment."

"Then there are the racers who perhaps raced in Formula Three in their teens or early 20s but got sidetracked by business pressures and other commitments. Now their businesses have developed and their other responsibilities have eased, and they are free to come back."



At the expensive end of the market, £250,000 will buy you an ex-Jackie Stewart Formula One Tyrrell. At the other end, £2,000 will buy and race a scruffy old MG



Historic racing car specialist Chris Alford describes the enthusiasts' circuit meetings as "hard but fair"

Wood adds: "A proper running engine is likely to be worth £30,000 on its own. A competitively put-together historic F1 car is going to be worth a minimum of £75,000, while other cars would not sell for less than half a million pounds."

The money is not the end of it: a car with 500bhp on tap and with a top speed more on a par with a light aircraft, also needs a delicate touch. Don says: "You cannot just pitch up

at a track, get into an F1 car and drive. A car with 500bhp is a lot of oomph, and you're very likely to end up facing the wrong way."

You will also have to earn an RAC International Grade One competition licence by gaining experience on the lower rungs of historic racing.

Even for those with the driving skills and the cash, there can be one last pitfall before the pit lane. The very tall, and those whose girth has

paid the price of too many business lunches, might need to consider carefully a career in historic F1 racing. The cars were originally built for drivers who were as light as they were athletic, and might need serious reconstruction for those who are more Mr Blobby than Mr Brundle.

Chris Alford Racing and Sports cars, 01273 845966 Don Wood, 01202 578999

TRACK SAFETY

Motor sport low in the deaths league

The hazards of sport are notoriously random, Ian Morton writes. The scenario was set almost 100 years ago, when that splendid motor racing and speed-record pioneer Camille Jenatton, the first man to record more than 60mph, grandly declared that he wanted to die in a car.

In due course, he did — on his way to hospital, although it was after having been shot by a companion, who had mistaken him for a wild boar during a hunting expedition in the Ardennes.

Motor sport may seem to encapsulate the most potentially fragile mix of focused mechanical violence, manufacturing weaknesses, pure happenstance and human misjudgment, yet it does not kill with the regularity of seemingly gentler pursuits.

In England and Wales, in 1992, the last year for which figures are complete, the Office for National Statistics records that 67 men and 17 women died in the course of sundry sports and pastimes. Six drivers died on motor-racing circuits.

Horse-riding was responsible for a dozen deaths that year, followed by air sports (11), water sports not involving drowning (10), athletics (nine), competitive motor-cycling, sub-aqua and climbing (eight each), and

sailing (seven). Fishing killed as many participants as motor racing. Bowls, dancing, weight training and acting as a cricket umpire each claimed a victim.

Motor racing has been getting safer. The RAC, which controls and monitors 2,000 events a year, says that during 1963-77, a total of 73 fatalities in all forms of motor sport were recorded in Britain, 48 of them involving cars on circuits. From 1978 to 1992, the toll was 46; 20 in circuit cars and three after heart attacks.

Over the whole three decades, race speeds steadily increased and safety standards rose: it is one of the marvels of the modern sport that television millions may rejoice together as today's grand prix driver steps from the twisted hulk of a car that has just been shredded in a high-speed, upside-down crash and within minutes is out again in the spare car, apparently unharmed — like Jacques Villeneuve, who crashed spectacularly at 140mph in practice for the French Grand Prix but promptly jumped into a spare car to drive again.

But if the statistics are to be believed, Villeneuve would have been in no greater danger if he had gone fishing instead.

Why Hill makes it look easy

Silverstone should show unruffled drives because the cars demand it

When Damon Hill wins tomorrow, as he probably will, we are unlikely to be dazzled by a spectacular display of on-the-limit driving. There will be no obvious wrestling with the steering while taking his Williams to the ragged edge, few puffs of smoke from locking wheels under late braking and hardly a kerf touched, let alone run over. He'll make it look so easy that some will validly wonder what the big deal is.

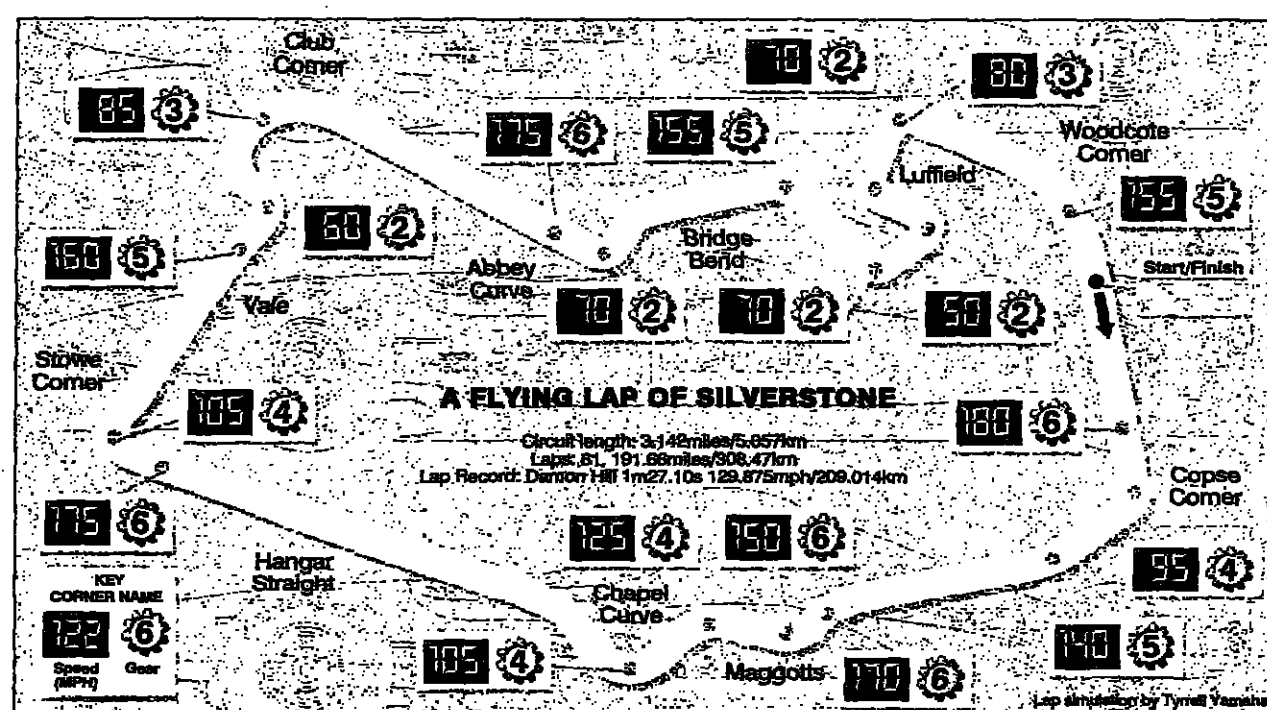
The big deal is very big: this year Hill will get paid around £4 million for his 16 weekends' work, which is not a lot to pay a man to win a world championship, as he surely will. So why, if he's that good, are we not going to be impressed by the spectacle?

Three reasons: first, so superior is the Williams that he is unlikely to have to push to the limit as hard as anybody else in the race. Second, his style belies his pace. Hill is smooth, very smooth. Time after time we've witnessed another pole position fall to the Englishman and were it not for the split times signalling something special, Murray would remain simply excited rather than manic. The fluid, unflustered movement of the steering wheel is the way Damon likes to do it. A

technique no doubt honed during his early days racing motorcycles when being rough at the controls meant taking a tumble. It's probably no coincidence that his first team-mate at Williams, Alain Prost, used exactly the same deceptive style to become grand prix racing's second most successful driver, with four world championships, to Fangio's five.

The third reason is that today's cars have to be driven smoothly. They have enough downforce at speeds higher than 120 mph to pin themselves to a ceiling and tyres that grip like superglue. The cornering speeds and G-forces are phenomenal, but the peak of grip falls away very quickly as soon as the cars start to slide, so drivers must not let the car get out of shape. Any amount of sliding visible from outside the car will mean precious tenths of a second lost. It's a shame: it would be lovely to see Formula One cars power-sliding through the corners.

So Hill drives with neat, rhythmic precision, keeping his Williams-Renault fractionally inside the limit of grip, unlike his team-mate Jacques Villeneuve. Watch the two lapping in practice and you could be forgiven for thinking



PALMER'S KNOWLEDGE



drive fast, few have the innate ability to do the right thing when grip starts to be lost — which is normally deftly applying opposite steering lock and momentarily easing off the throttle.

For most, such a situation provokes panic, sometimes frozen, but virtually always severely flustered. Not for the racing driver, for whom a loss of grip prompts a subconscious correction barely even

acknowledged by the fear part of the brain. The racing driver doesn't slow to recover his confidence, but immediately pushes again, continually nibbling at the limit, though trying not to exceed it.

Having said that, controlling a skid at 40mph is easy, many fast road drivers can even do it (but don't try). Club racers feel good about not losing control when the back end of their sports car lets go at Brands Hatch, cornering at 85mph. For grand prix drivers these would be a non-event, their reflexes are exercised by the instant flick of correction required to prevent a 150mph skid resulting in a spin.

And then there's judgement, the ability to sense speeds to within a couple of miles an hour without the time to even glance at the speedometer — if there was one. The ability to sense how much grip your car has, to judge exactly how late you can brake and then precisely whether or not your

speed has reduced just enough to be able to come off the brakes and turn in to the corner without crashing; these are the bits that differentiate between the brilliant and the merely very good, and determine how fast you can enter the corner without screwing up the exit.

Misjudge it, and you're off the road. Getting back on the accelerator early on the way out is the easy bit; too much too soon and you simply ease off, correcting the slide.

Driver skill is difficult to witness, the sheer terror of racing at up to 190mph is enough to fill most with sufficient respect. Until ten years ago it was even more shrouded in mystique, but since then complex data recorders have at least enabled every movement of the steering wheel, throttle and brakes to be analysed. But still, the cockpit is a lonely place.

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The world is trying to prise Fifties American cars from their proud Cuban owners, reports John Naish

Cuba's classics stay for the last great parade



Havana is back to business as usual. Castro's opening of the country to foreigners to attract desperately needed dollars means the capital is once again the centre of a web of shady deals and crafty dealers — and old American cars are one of the hottest commodities.

I met one of the dealers — let's call him Jerry — in the bar of the Hotel Inglaterra, which was immortalised in Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*. He had left his professional job in Britain to become a fixer, armed with a mobile phone and an overdose of public-school charm. Jerry was feeling particularly happy. The previous day he had tracked down an immaculate Ford Thunderbird, stored in a farmer's house since the revolution.

A phone call to Britain had secured backers for the \$5,000 asking price — a fortune in Cuba — another call had found a ready buyer in America. Now he was after a Cuban whose name he could use to ship the car out, and a port through which he could lose the Thunderbird's Cuban identity, enabling it to get past the American embargo.

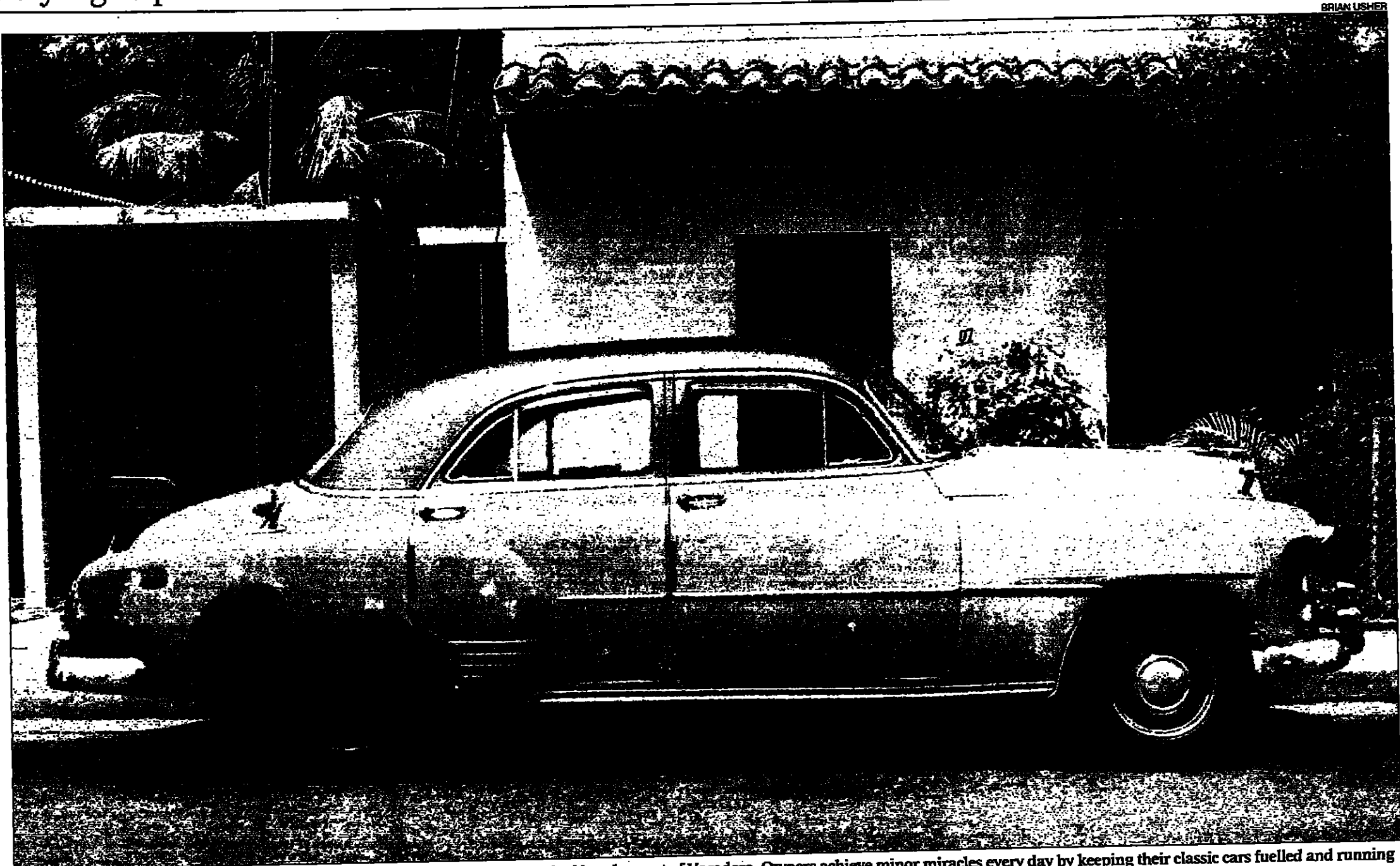
Jerry had already traded a wealth of similar immaculate cars that had been trapped in the amber of *la Revolución*. He had contacts scouring the provinces for more, and had me seriously considering a venture to liberate a hoard of old Harley-Davidsons too.

One of Jerry's competitors is the Cuban Government itself, which has been offering owners lucrative deals to prise away their cars for foreign sale. But Cubans love their American classics, and have spent three decades doggedly maintaining them in the face of crippling spares shortages. They even have their own motor museum, tucked away in a back street, which displays Che Guevara's kitsch green Chevrolet.

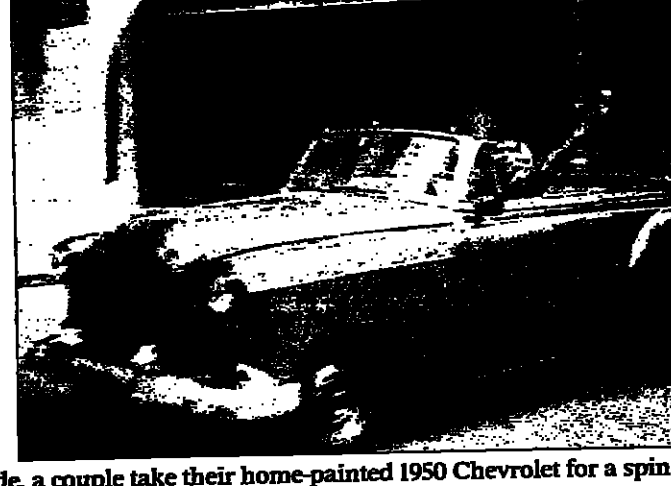
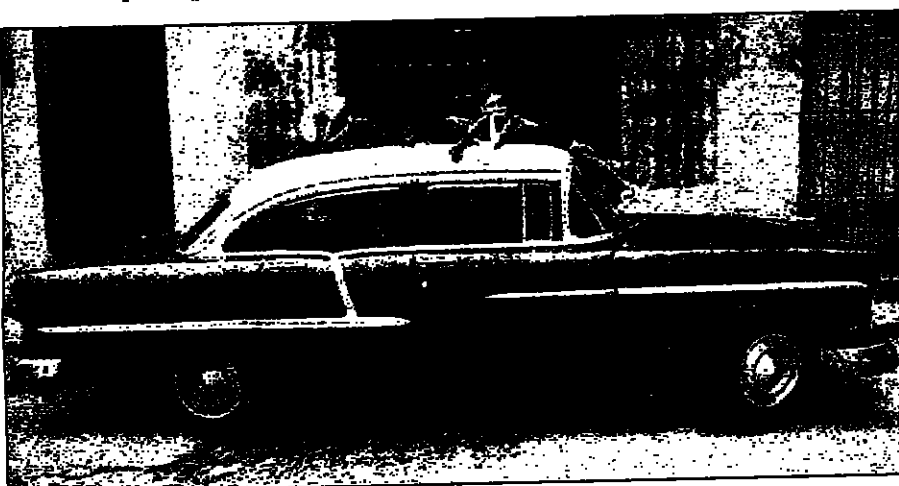
The streets are still dotted with the old gas guzzlers in a variety of conditions — some near perfect, but most scarred by backyard repairs — to say nothing of some of the home-cooked paint jobs.

Saturday evening on Havana's old square, the *Parque Central*, sees the pick of the bunch on display as proud families take their Cadillacs, Buicks and Plymouths out for their weekly or monthly parade around town.

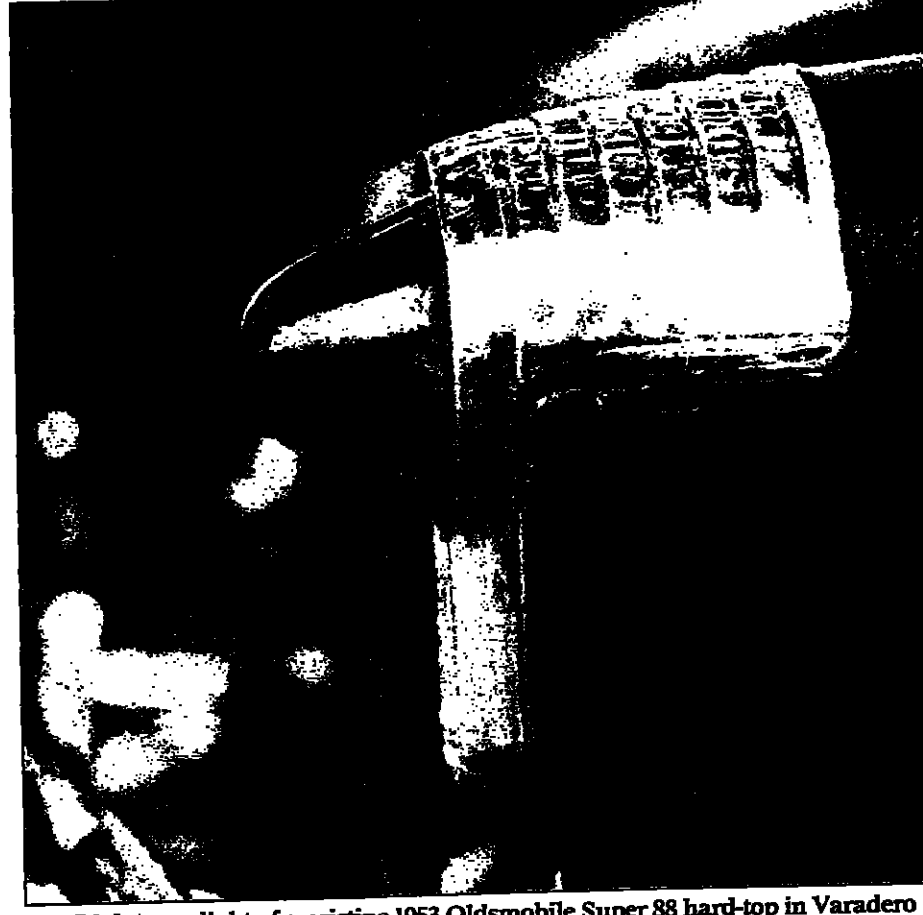
The fact that they manage to take them out at all is evidence of Cuban ingenuity in the face of adversity. Most of the cars only manage about ten to the gallon — and a gallon of fuel costs more than the average Cuban's weekly disposable income. But to join one of the world's coolest cavalcades, it's well worth it.



Patched up and preserved: a 1951 Chevrolet Styleline Deluxe at Cuba's principal beach resort of Varadero. Owners achieve minor miracles every day by keeping their classic cars fuelled and running



Typical Havana street scenes: left, a parked 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air, and, centre, a 1950 Buick Riviera Sedan. Enjoying the weekend parade, a couple take their home-painted 1950 Chevrolet for a spin



A primly kept 1950 Plymouth Special Deluxe, left, in the suburb of Playa: the owner, a doctor, uses it only at weekends. Right, rear light of a pristine 1953 Oldsmobile Super 88 hard-top in Varadero

Will British drivers happily be seen in a car so unfortunately named?

Basket-case marketing hampers Toyota's MPV

Picture the confusion of the moment. You need to get some petrol and shout through the kitchen door: "Just filling up the picnic, darling." Two hours later, the family is in a field staring at empty basket as the parents start arguing over who was in charge of the egg sandwiches. If you think this unlikely, then imagine life with a car called the Toyota Picnic, writes Kevin Eason.

It arrives here for the October Motor Show to "change the notion that travelling with kids is as much fun as watching a penalty shoot-out". Actually a penalty shoot-out is infinitely more fun than travelling with children (so long as Germany lose). But Toyota also believes that people want to drive a vehicle named the Picnic.

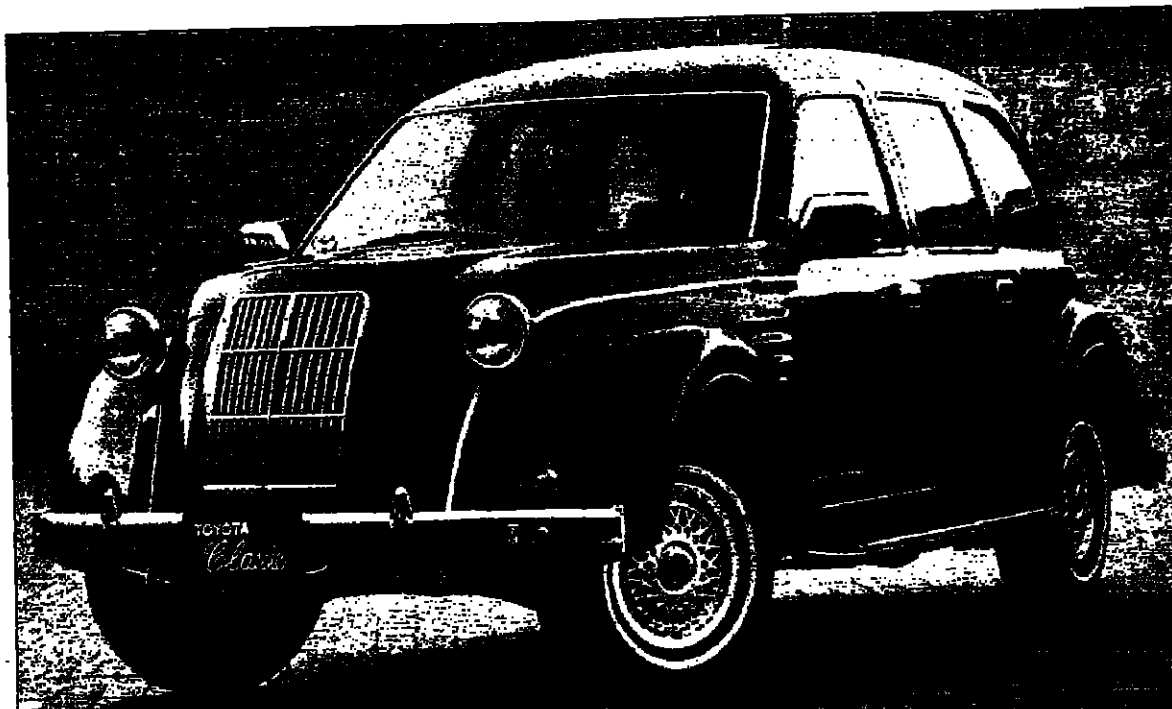


The Picnic: standard fare repackaged for "family fun" with an over-egged title

vehicle the Picnic, particularly for business drivers, must be the marketing equivalent of being one sandwich short of a, well, a picnic.

More fun for family and leisure motoring might be Toyota's look back at the past, which surprisingly shows more than a family resemblance to the Picnic. Toyota has started

selling a retro car based on its first domestic model, the AA, in Japan at a price of around £50,000. It comes as a two-litre with automatic transmission, air-conditioning and a reproduction interior designed to look like the 1936 original ... and thankfully, it is merely called the Classic.



A better bet for fun motoring may be Toyota's retro-styled Classic, which echoes the firm's 1935 AA model

Alan Copps finds that fine detail touches like the ventilation system make Fiat's new upper-medium car a winner

Little things mean a lot in the Marea

Motoring's not just a matter of taste, it's a matter of smell. If you are about to sell a second hand car you can spend good money on a little spray called "new car perfume" a vague mix of leather and wood pongs designed to make any old banger smell like a new one.

But if you choose to invest in Fiat's latest model, the Marea, when it goes on sale here next year you will be buying, among other things, an odour neutralizer which in the company's words "eliminates the characteristic new car smell" which cars normally retain for four to six months after they leave the factory.

The neutralizer is just one touch in a ventilation system which Fiat has lavished a lot of work. It also has a pollen filter as standard and a setting marked "Max Def". A Week-end with Max Def might sound like a heavy rock fan's fantasy, but in fact the Week-end is the estate version of the Marea and Max Def is short for Maximum Defrosting.

It's a setting on the automatic heater which means that in winter instead of having to adjust four separate controls to demist the car you simply turn one knob. Conditions on a brief test drive in Italy were not ideal to try the device — the optional air conditioning was more useful and very effective — but Fiat claims that if the temperature outside is -10C it takes just ten minutes to warm the passenger compartment to 19C, and 20 minutes to get to 22C.

All this work on ventilation is typical of the attention to detail, combined with some adventurous and innovative styling, that has helped the Italian company increase sales by nearly 20 per cent this year, with the Punto getting in to Britain's top ten cars, a rare feat for a product from any manufacturer without a factory here.

But so far Fiat has been playing to its strengths, making original and striking small and medium cars from the tiny Cinquecento to the highly-praised Bravo and Brava twins introduced last year. With the Marea and its Week-end estate version it

FIAT MAREA

Fiat Marea
Engines: Four-cylinder 1.6-litre, 103bhp; 1.8-litre, 113bhp or five-cylinder 2-litre, 147bhp. Four-cylinder 1.9-litre turbo diesel, 75 or 100bhp; five-cylinder 2.4-litre TD, 124bhp. Performance (saloon): 1.6-litre, Max speed 117mph, 0-62mph in 10.7 seconds; 2-litre, 129mph, 0-62mph in 8.7 seconds; TD75, Max speed 104mph, 0-62mph in 15.2 seconds; TD125, Max speed 122mph, 0-62mph in 10.5 seconds. Weekend versions are about 10mph and 0.5 seconds slower. Economy (EC average) 1.6 saloon, 37mpg; TD100 Weekend, 41mpg. Prices: to be announced

steps into one of the most fiercely competitive sectors of the market. These cars replace the Tempra, a model that really failed to happen in Britain, and pitch the country's third-largest car importer head-on against some of the most highly rated and aggressively marketed cars of recent years: the Ford Mondeo, Vauxhall Vectra and Peugeot 406 among others.

It's also an area for fleet sales, which account for well over half the total sales in Britain. That means it is also a more conservative category and is perhaps why the styling of the saloon doesn't quite match the eye-catching originality of its smaller cousins. The estate, however, is a good looking car, the lines flowing right back to the hatch in one sweep and avoiding that unwelcome "bolt-on" effect which characterises some of its rivals.

Overall, Fiat has done another good job with these cars. A choice of three trim levels and six engines, three new turbo-diesels and three petrol of 1.6, 1.8 and 2 litres, offers the

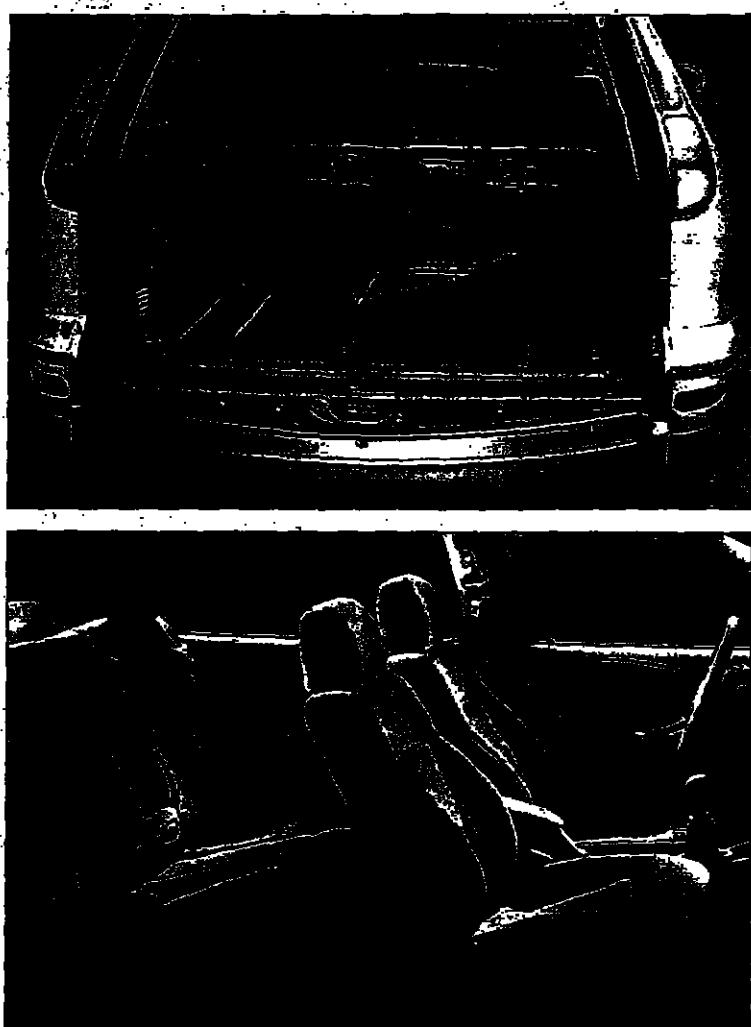
kind of range expected in this category. They are typical free-revving Fiat engines which respond to full use of the five-speed gearbox. The turbo diesels are remarkably quiet and flexible. Outside the car there's no mistaking the diesel note but inside both the noise level and the performance, especially of the largest 2.4-litre engine, matches that of many a petrol-engined rival, and offers impressive economy.

A demonstration run through countryside around Parma included the long hillclimb on which Enzo Ferrari tested some of his first cars. His ascent was no doubt more spectacular but the Marea went up the steep series of tightly twisting hairpins with minimum fuss.

The attention paid to ventilation is just part of a whole package of features designed to increase driving comfort. These include much more thorough noise-dampening than in some previous Fiat models and elimination of vibrations transmitted through the steering column by the use of a rigid magnesium beam behind the dashboard. This, according to Fiat, puts the cars among the quietest in the category. The controls are also well placed in a dashboard which owes a lot to the Bravo and Brava.

The ride is firmer than in most cars of the category, set up for enthusiastic rather than relaxed driving and emphasising the Italian character. Unfortunately Italian roads also have a character of their own and the bumps, cracks, cobblestones and potholes provoked a fair amount of rattle and bounce around the dashboard, especially in the estate version. The ride in the saloon is better with very little roll however vigorously it is cornered.

Passenger space is reasonable, but you cannot get a six-foot passenger in the rear seat with any comfort. If the front is adjusted for a driver of similar height, the estate has an impressive amount of load space and shows another one of those detail touches of Fiat which I can't help wondering why every other manufacturer doesn't just copy. The hatch lifts



The estate's hatch system is excellent, but rear seats feel cramped

up just like the hatch on any similar car, but the rear bumper also drops down to produce a completely flat base for loading operations. This avoids that back-breaking business of having to heave heavy loads over a sill. The latches on the hatch are also sensibly placed at the side so you don't crack your head when you stand up straight.

The estate is expected to take a large slice of the sales. The company

has ambitious plans to make 150,000 Mareas next year and 47 per cent of them will be the Weekend version. The cars will go on sale on the Continent in mid-September but will not be launched in Britain until January, which should allow time for any teething troubles to be sorted out.

And the name? In Italian, Marea means "tide". The Fiat Tide? Perhaps they thought that wouldn't wash in Britain.

DR DASHBOARD

Fined for being seen on the box?

Q I write to you aghast, dear doctor. There I was sitting quietly waiting to turn right when a policeman pulled me over and claimed I was blocking traffic. I was merely waiting in line to turn. What is the problem with that?

A Depends on what you were up to, dear patient. When you entered the junction, was it a crossroads and were you at traffic lights, and were there lots of attractive criss-cross yellow lines arranged in a lovely box?

Q There was a car in front: the lights changed and we both moved forward. So I took up my position in the yellow box. What's the problem?

A That's the problem. You set off behind the car in front like a sheep simply because the lights changed and you thought you should get moving. Were there cars from the opposite direction waiting to turn right too, because I suspect they found a great lump of a Cortina in their way? And that was you.

Q I can't help it if there isn't room to turn. What am I supposed to do about the fact that the roads aren't wide enough?

A Have you ever read the Highway Code? Your friendly local bobby probably told you never to enter a box junction — that's the pretty yellow thing painted on the road — unless your exit was clear. In other words, let the car ahead take up its position to turn right and you do something really quite novel for an impatient dstick: you WAIT. Otherwise all you are doing is throwing up a road-block against oncoming traffic. I can't wait until the new cameras get a look at your driving antics.

Q Er, what cameras? I don't like the sound of

this. Is Big Brother extending his beady eye even further on our roads? Nothing would surprise me these days with these speeding cameras.

A Cameras have been set up on the three busiest London junctions along the Marylebone and Euston Roads to watch for people like you, drivers who block junctions because they are either too impatient or stupid, or have simply not read a Highway Code since Tufty was a gleam in Daddy Squirrel's eye. They will be watching for drivers who do U-turns or block box junctions — and then issuing fines.

Q Fines because you don't turn right properly? You must be joking. What sort of fines?

A Up to £1,000 in theory although that would only be for a major offence. Fixed penalties of £20 and £40 are more likely.

Q Well, I don't care. I don't live in London so why should I worry about it?

A Because, if the scheme is a success in London, you can bet it is coming to a street corner near you soon and then you really will have to try harder when you hit that indicator button... assuming you actually use the indicator button. You do use the indicators when you turn right, don't you?

Q Sort of. I mean, you don't need them all the time, do you? It's obvious when you are turning, especially to go right. There is nowhere else to go, is there?

A You really are a lost cause, aren't you? Lost up the junctions, no indicators — bolshie, too. I am going to write this prescription out for you: now I want you to take two doses of the Highway Code every day for the next fortnight. Better still, find out the number of your local bus.

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The British car which will attempt a new world land speed record faces a critical stage, writes Alan Copps

Thrust is ready to turn on the power

The car in which Andy Green intends to become the first man to travel faster than the speed of sound on land faces its first full test next week, harnessing the twin Rolls-Royce jet engines which produce as much power as 141 Formula One cars — equivalent to seven times the horsepower of tomorrow's British Grand Prix grid.

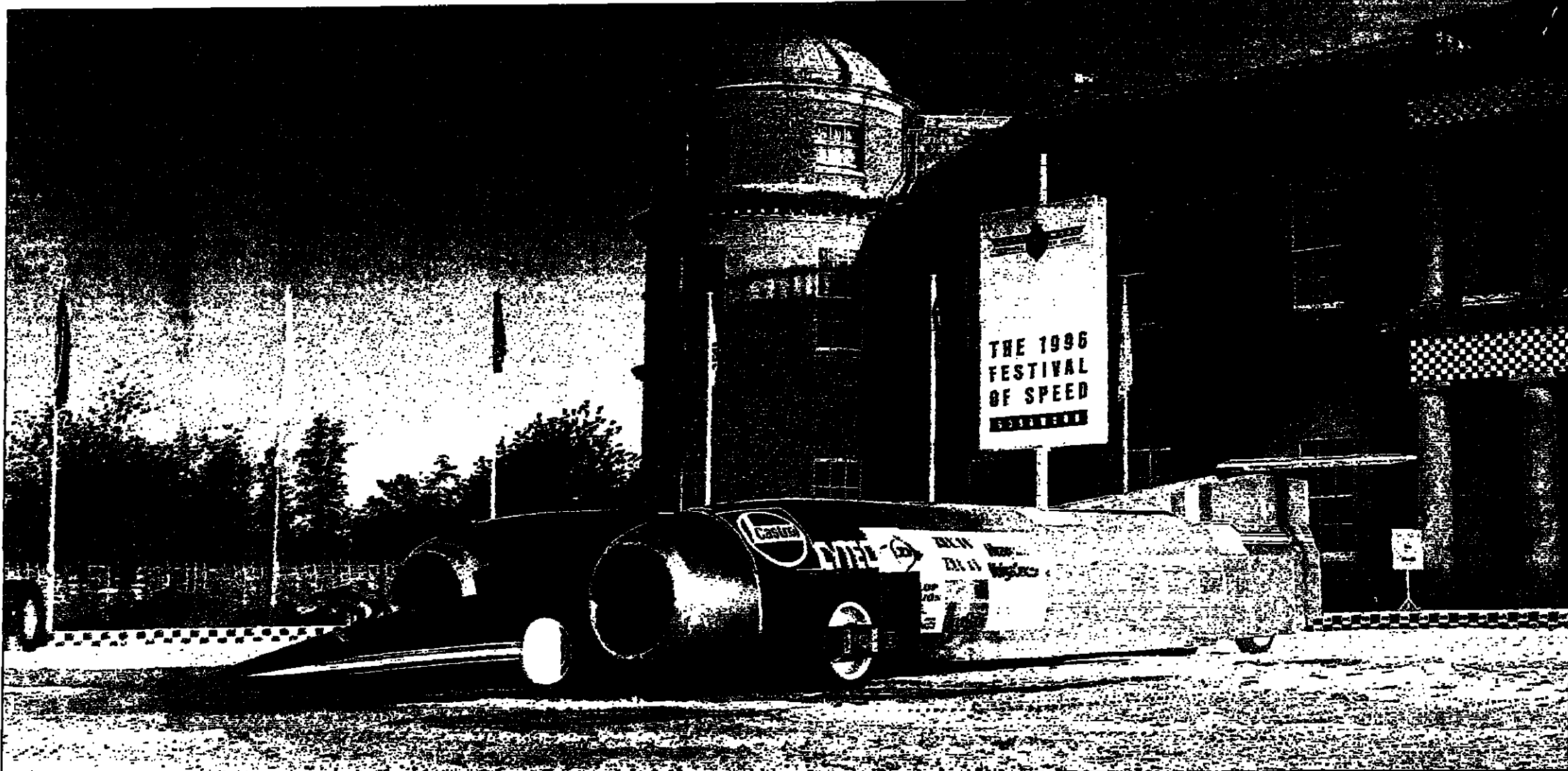
The engines which will power Thrust SSC across the Black Rock desert in Nevada have already been briefly fitted to the car to check its systems and for its first complete appearance at the Goodwood Festival of Speed last month. Then they were removed for individual testing. They will be refitted and run up for the first time in a static test at the Ministry of Defence's research establishment at Boscombe Down, Wiltshire. The complete car will be tied down on a test rig as the engines are run up through their power range to ensure that the thrust from each side is perfectly balanced.

If that test is successful the car will then be transported back to its home base at Farnborough, Hampshire, fitted with wheels and Dunlop rubber tyres of the type used for fighter aircraft and tested on the runway up to speeds of 200mph.

Once that hurdle has been passed the car, 65 tons of spares and a crew of about 25 including Green and the project's founder Richard Noble, current holder of the land speed record at 633mph, will be flown to a test track in Jordan, where it could reach a potential 650mph, to begin the final shake-down for the record attempt.

Thrust SSC has been completed during two months of intensive work at Q shed at the Defence Research Agency at Farnborough, Hampshire. The team has six Rolls-Royce Spey engines of the type used in RAF Phantom fighters available. They produce about 100,000 bhp and consume four gallons of fuel per second.

For the testing in Jordan and the record attempt the car will run on solid aluminium wheels, since no



Thrust SSC — the car in which Andy Green hopes to travel faster than sound — faces a full test, harnessing the twin Rolls-Royce jet engines which produce power equivalent to 141 Formula One cars

tyres could handle the stresses at such speeds. The build up towards record-level speeds has to be taken slowly since the handling of the car changes radically when the conventional runway wheels are substituted for the solid aluminium type.

"We will do as much testing in Jordan as we can, that is until the weather turns bad or the money

runs out. The surface there, if anything, is better than that at Black Rock but the track is only 10.2 miles long rather than 14 miles," said Noble as the crew prepared to move on again.

The test site, at the aircraft base of Al Jafir in Jordan has been offered to the Thrust team by Prince Feisal whose country has a

long association with the British armed forces. Green is an RAF fighter pilot. The seven-ton car will be transported there from Stansted airport in one of the giant Soviet-built Antonov 124 aircraft of the HeavyLift company.

The offer of the Jordan site was made after a worldwide search for a suitable proving ground for the

monster car. A BBC *Tomorrow's World* TV programme detailing the search for a hard silica surface like that found at Black Rock was seen by Ken Waughman who was part of a British military team which surveyed the Jordanian desert in 1946. His call prompted an official approach to the Jordanian Government and Prince Feisal took a

personal hand in arrangements after Richard Noble made a preliminary visit. The Al Jafir military base will provide hangars for storing the car and the operational crew's equipment and sleeping quarters.

The use of such a long test track will help the British Thrust team catch up with their American rival

Craig Breedlove, who has been granted the use of a runway at Edwards Air Force Base, where the Space Shuttle land, to make test runs in his single-jet car, Spirit of America. If testing in both camps goes to schedule the two teams intend to run on alternate days in September when the record attempts begin in earnest.

It's the performance that drives her crazy

Sex and fast cars. Whatever the logic of it, somehow they're inextricably linked. Men can't help believing that the bigger their engine size, the bigger their... engine size. Women may mock and mutter about "penile extensions", but the truth is that they are believers too. Given the choice between a battered two-tone Volkswagen Beetle and a gleaming silver Porsche

Racy novelist Tess Stimson finds high-speed G-forces hit the spot

Carrera, it is surprising how many women manage to overlook the paunch and the wedding ring as they imagine what's under the bonnet.

Formula One motor racing is the ultimate sex-and-speed kick. Just the thought of lining

up on the grid in pole position at Silverstone does more for most men than Pamela Anderson in a wet T-shirt.

So what happens when you put a woman behind the wheel? In the course of re-searching my sex-and-fast-

cars novel — *Pole Position* — I selflessly decided to find out and joined the Brands Hatch racing school for a day.

To get me in the mood, I was given Nigel Mansell's own racing overalls to wear (he will be surprised to find he is a voluptuous 36D when next he dons them) and introduced to Mark Cole, the experienced racing driver who was going to show me how it was done. Mark was extremely good looking and very sexy. On the other hand, had he been buckling me into a Lada instead of a top-of-the-range BMW 318i SE maybe I'd have thought differently.

Seatbelt safely fastened, I



Lapping it all up: Tess Stimson climbs behind the wheel of a single seater that sends her pulse right into the red

drove gingerly out onto the Brands Hatch racing track. Mark talked me through a couple of laps, pointing out lines into corners, telling me when to brake and so on.

The BMW was equipped with a cage and roll bar, but otherwise felt like driving an ordinary saloon. The difference was that no old ladies with walking sticks were about to step off the kerb in front of me. Gradually I pushed my speed up into double figures.

As soon as I got the idea, we returned to the pits and changed places. Mark drove at a leisurely speed around the track showing me what I'd done wrong. Five minutes of this and I decided he wasn't that good looking after all.

Perhaps detecting my fading interest, Mark offered to give me a "fast lap". Slightly unsure whether this was part of the approved curriculum or even legal, I agreed. I'm here to tell you that the sex-and-speed thing works. Mark put his foot down and the scenery blurred. We hit corners so fast I was certain the car was going to shoot off the track.

Mark glanced at me. "You okay?" I shrugged nonchalant-

ly, no easy feat given the G-forces pinning me into place. "I live in Rome. All the Italians drive like this."

"Want to go a bit faster then?" "Why not?" I said.

Terror is like pain. At a certain point, you cross your personal threshold and after that, nothing matters. As we careered over cambers and overtook everything in our path, the adrenalin hit me,

and suddenly I was egging him on, daring him to go faster. He was a superb driver, handling a familiar car on a track he knew like the back of his hand. It was one of the most exhilarating experiences of my life.

I knew that once we'd finished with the BMW and I got behind the wheel of the Formula One single seater I'd be driving solo, it would never

match up — I could never drive like this alone. But oh, while it lasted...

Formula One is enjoyable to watch on television. But compared with racing yourself, it's like listening to the couple next door having wild sex, while you're condemned to a mug of cocoa and eternal celibacy.

● *Pole Position*. Tess Stimson's steamy new book about

love and life on the racetrack is out now — and we have 30 paperback copies to give away. Just answer this question and send the answer on a postcard to *Car 96*, The Times, 1, Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Who was the British woman skier who successfully broke through into Formula One?

The winning entries will be drawn at random on July 23.

Win a day on the track worth £165

Today *The Times*, in association with Everyman Motor Racing at Mallory Park, offers readers the chance to test their driving skills with a prize worth £165.

The winner can choose from a wide range of driving activities. Including racing cars, rally cars, off-road cars, plus he or she can tackle a tank and military vehicles. Two runners-up receive a pair of tickets to any race meeting of their choice — and there are 40 to choose from — at Mallory Park, Leicestershire.

All you have to do to enter is call our competition hotline 0891-40 50 06 with your answer to the following question:

Who won the 1995 British Grand Prix? The winners will be chosen at random from all correct entries received by midnight on Wednesday July 17, 1996.

● Tony Williams of Sandown, Isle of Wight, has won the June 29 test drive competition.

CALL 0891-40 50 06

If you would like to enjoy a day out at Mallory Park, call 01455 841 670 for information.



On the eve of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone 11 readers tie at the top of our fantasy leaderboard in the race for our £10,000 jackpot. They head the table with 4,694 points each after the performance of their teams in the French Grand Prix. Below we print the top 11 positions after the eight grand prix races in our competition. Remember, the Australian Grand Prix does not count in our game.

F1 FANTASY DRIVE LEADERBOARD AFTER EIGHT RACES

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01 4,694	Courty Fine F	J Hunt	12 4,665	GMC	S Hardcastle
01 4,694	No Team Name	C Clarke	12 4,665	Xenon	H Whyte
01 4,694	Villa Volta	M Buchanan	12 4,665	Red Streak	R Hegarty
01 4,694	First Light	C Brookes	12 4,665	Bo's Bashers Cars	N Bevis
01 4,694	Scully Cars	J Hasler	12 4,665	Packards	A Packerman-Walsh
01 4,694	No Team Name	T McLoughlin	12 4,665	Trevor Tyres	Elliot Nathan
01 4,694	The Destroyers	D Sellers	12 4,665	Duplata 10 Racing	K Holmes
01 4,694	Speedy 1	G Walker	12 4,665	The Winning Team	C Plant
01 4,694	Lutov	P Hinchcliffe	12 4,665	Garney Gadgets	P Shepherd

To improve your team you can change up to four of your drivers on our transfer line below (Republic of Ireland 004 499 010 0332). Only one call is allowed in the transfer period. More than one call will invalidate your transfers. Transfers must result in a team comprising one driver from each of the eight groups.

CALL 0891-405 032

FROM NOON ON WEDNESDAY JULY 17 UNTIL NOON THURSDAY JULY 25

CHECK YOUR SCORE

Players can check the scores and positions of their teams by calling the hotline number below (Republic of Ireland readers should call 004 499 020 0501). Remember to have your 10-digit PIN number handy when you call. The line currently carries all positions after the French Grand Prix and will be updated again on Wednesday July 17.

CALL 0891-774 734 24-HRS

0891 calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p at all other times

WIN TEAM MCLAREN CLUB MEMBERSHIP

■ EIGHT million British television viewers will watch the Silverstone Grand Prix in their homes, but many fans succeed in getting closer to the cars and drivers.

■ YOU COULD join them, for Marlboro McLaren Mercedes is offering a year's free membership to the Team McLaren Club, which is normally £45 per person or £69 for family membership. Members receive a starter pack, including the Team McLaren polo shirt, membership card, poster of this year's car, car sticker, pin badge and *Racing Line* magazine. Members also have the chance to win trips to the European grands prix and McLaren's headquarters.

■ BUT A *Car 96* reader can short-circuit the process by winning this valuable membership — and a visit to McLaren's factory. There are also three runners-up prizes of McLaren VIP sweatshirts, and an additional prize for fans who want to join the McLaren Team: the first five people to call the membership hotline on 01274 771833 (lines open until 9pm today) will receive a cap signed by David Coulthard and Mika Hakkinen.

■ ANSWER these questions for our *Car 96* competition and send them on a postcard to Admail 622, Woking, Surrey GU21 1WH. Unusual rules apply, closing date July 22.

1. What are the colours of David Coulthard's helmet, and what do they signify?
2. McLaren is one of the most successful teams in Formula One, with how many grands prix victories?
3. What is the number of Mika Hakkinen's car?



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Track surgeon Sid Watkins tells Jennai Cox why drivers in Britain are the rudest and most aggressive

Fl's crash shunt and spin doctor

Official track surgeon Sid Watkins's passion for Formula One has not been tempered by having to tend to drivers injured in crashes — most famously Ayrton Senna, who died at the Imola circuit, and Mika Hakkinen who survived a terrifying crash at the Australian Grand Prix last year. Instead, he has campaigned vigorously for improved safety and faster response to accidents. In his book, *Life at the Limit — Triumph and Tragedy in Formula One*, published yesterday, Professor Watkins profiles leading grand prix personalities and describes the races he most loves — and fears. He is hoping for dry conditions at tomorrow's race — and would like to see Damon Hill win.

How did you first learn to drive?

As a kid in my father's garage. I learned by moving the cars around for him when I was about 14. It was on private property so we never went on open roads. I passed my test first time at 17 in a open-topped Morris 8.

What was your first car?

A sky-blue 1927 MG which I had as a medical student in the 1940s. It was one year older than me. Being in the car business, my dad produced it from somewhere when I was 19.

What car do you drive now?

The same one I have had for the past 12 years — a banana yellow 1982 Mercedes SE which I am restoring because it has a lot of rust. I bought it because it had been converted to go faster. I like quick cars but do not drive fast any more.

Have you ever driven a Formula One car?

No, but I did have the opportunity to about six years ago. The racing

STEERING COLUMN



Sid Watkins's rear spoiled his chances of driving a Tyrrell

team manager Ken Tyrrell said I could drive one if I could fit in the cockpit. He knew he was on to a short bet because there was just no way I could get my rear inside.

Do you enjoy driving?

Very much, but especially at night: the car seems to go better in the dark and the roads are quieter.

What is your dream car?

The one that I own.

What is your most hated car?

Volvo Estates with ladies in green wellies in them. The two-always seem to go together.

What is your worst habit in the car?

Cigars. They make the car smell. I notice it when I get in but once I start driving and light up, it's alright. Other people complain



Trackside medical drama: Watkins's doctors lift Mika Hakkinen from the wreckage of his race car after a terrifying accident at the Australian Grand Prix last year

about it a lot but it is too bad because I hate air freshener.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

Mainly their bad manners. This country is much worse than others. They are very aggressive and careless, especially at intersections and are always insisting on what they consider to be their rights instead of driving defensively. I've had some bad accidents inflicted on me, but never caused any.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

I was rolled down a ravine by a friendly co-driver while competing in a rally in Nigeria in 1955. We were driving from Lagos to

Oshogbo. We became pedestrians for the rest of the rally.

Have you ever had points on your licence?

Yes, three times, all for speeding. The last time was in 1993 when I was going 84mph on the M6 early one morning with not another car in sight and was caught by an unmarked police car. Every other time I was stopped for speeding I had been rushing to hospital.

What do you listen to on your car stereo?

Ballet is my favourite. I like *The Nutcracker* or *Swan Lake* and I also like the three tenors or my tape of golden oldies. I play music to entertain me as I often drive alone.

If you were Secretary of State for Transport what is the first thing you would do?

First, I would tease John Major — he looks eminently teasing and you could really send him up. Then I would build more roads. The communications system in this country is very poor. You can take environmental concerns into account with wise choices and by not always taking the shortest route. I would also allow faster speeds, up to 80mph on motorways.

What is your least favourite car advertisement?

That Renault "Papa" advert because it is so silly and goes on and on and on. The billboard with the chap surfing a car is also daft.



BEFORE the SLK's tyres have even hit the ground (see page one), the competition from Porsche has been unveiled. The company's new Boxster is the first junior Porsche for a decade and promises fantastic performance and cute looks: the 2.5-litre, six-cylinder midship-mounted engine is good for 204bhp and a 0-62mph time of 6.9 seconds plus a top speed of 149mph. The price is to be announced in October but 350 British orders have already been taken.

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For sale: the time-warp Alfa



The extreme rarity of the Alfa Romeo twin-cam's bodywork made the owner become obsessed with its security

A rare sports car has now emerged from 40 years in a cocoon, reports John Shaw

The glorious Italian sports car was so rare that its owner became convinced it would be a target for theft — and bricked it up in his garage for safety.

The elderly owner last drove the redish thoroughbred in the 1950s but since then it has been entombed at his home, unseen by the outside world. Whenever he wanted to look at it he would climb a ladder, remove part of the garage roof, and drop down inside.

It emerged only recently from its hiding place, under a clutter of tyres and tins, at Nutt's Corner in Northern Ireland because it is up for sale. Experts at Sotheby's were amazed by its fine condition and believe it could make up to £50,000 when it goes to auction on Monday.

The car is a rare survivor of a classic marque from between the wars. Alfa's 1500



Bricked into a garage, the car was reached via the roof

twin-cam sports cars were a product of the firm's rally success in the late 1920s. This example was first registered in Surrey between May 1929 and May 1930. The bodywork is thought to be by Zagato although the styling is similar to that devised by Farina of Turin for the Tipo 6C 1500, another of the Alfas that excites interest among collectors of this famous marque.

The twin-cam was acquired by Roy Slater, a leading Alfa Romeo authority, after the Second World War and he

sold it on to John Harkness in Northern Ireland in about 1950. Aware of its extreme rarity — only 157 similar examples were made and a handful with this bodywork — Harkness became obsessed with security and bricked up the garage doors as the ultimate deterrent to thieves.

Although he had no intention of driving the car again it remained close to his heart. He regularly returned to the garage, where he would peel back one of the corrugated roof panels to douse the body-

work and chassis with oil. As a result the 1500cc twin-cam engine is virtually free of rust and remains completely original.

The factory-fitted toolbox is still in place on the running board, the fold-down screen still sports its small side-mounted wind deflector and the red paintwork has remained untouched since it was applied by hand at the Alfa Romeo factory in 1928.

Martin Chisholm, head of Sotheby's car department, says: "This is an extremely rare find of an early pre-war sporting Alfa made all the more exciting by the fact that it is original and has survived the passage of time unaltered. One seldom sees cars like this at all let alone unaltered."

"I went over to inspect it and it was an amazing sight. We have had a lot of calls about it and expect it to do extremely well. Only a few were made mechanically and only a handful have this body. It is a survivor from a time warp."

The car is on view with other vehicles from the sale at the Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon, North London. Viewing today 1pm-6pm, Sunday 10am-6pm, Monday 9am-10.30pm.

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